DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 417 177 SP 037 824

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TITLE Team Teaching from the Perspective of Team Members.
PUB DATE 1997-05-00
NOTE 82p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Collegiality; Elementary Education; Elementary School Teachers; *Interpersonal Competence; Peer Relationship; Principals; Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Collaboration; *Team Teaching; Teamwork

ABSTRACT

This study examined advantages and disadvantages of team teaching and elements of successful teams from the perspective of eight teachers and a principal at one elementary school. The teachers were all participants in several types of school teams. During individual interviews, they discussed their thoughts and feelings about team teaching. Their interviews touched on six topics: elements they considered essential for teams to work; elements they considered potentially leading to failure of the team; benefits of working as team members; drawbacks of working as team members; benefits of team teaching for students; and miscellaneous thoughts. Overall, teachers had a positive view of team teaching, with some drawbacks noted. Positive aspects included more effective instruction and personal and professional support. Drawbacks included loss of benefits associated with having one class all day, loss of spontaneity, decentralization of decision making, and having to compromise. Elements of successful teams included supportive school policy, good school-building design, and desirable personality traits and behavior (e.g., honesty, the ability to communicate, flexibility, and confidence). Elements of unsuccessful teams included undesirable personality traits such as egotism, cynicism, and non-cooperation. Benefits to students included more effective teaching due to collaboration and having more than one teacher knowing each student. The 10 appendixes contain transcribed interviews. (Contains 15 references.) (SM)

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ED 417 177

Team Teaching from the Perspective of Team Members

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Abstract

This study examines team teaching from the perspective of eight teachers and one principal in an elementary school. Participants were asked to discuss their thoughts and feelings about team teaching. The results suggest an overall positive view of team teaching, with some drawbacks. The positive aspects include more effective instruction and personal and professional support. The drawbacks include loss of benefits associated with having one class all day and having to compromise. Participants discussed elements of successful teams: supportive school policy, school-building design, and desirable personality traits and behaviors, such as honesty, an ability to communicate, flexibility, and confidence. Elements of unsuccessful teams were undesirable personality traits, such as egotism and non-cooperation. Participants also discussed benefits for students.

Team Teaching from the Perspective of Team Members

Team teaching is not a new concept. However, the use of team teaching varies from school to school and has a history of success and failure. As I completed my teaching associateship in an elementary school that used team teaching, I observed that the team environment at this school appeared to be very positive. Having seen non-collaborating teachers and unsuccessful teams elsewhere, I wondered what these educators knew about the workings of teams. I wanted to discover their thoughts and feelings, positive and negative, about team teaching.

It has been proposed that reconsidering the benefits of team teaching can be helpful as educators continue to look for ways to reform schools. Trimble and Miller (1996) stated that

> creating and sustaining effective faculty teams may provide an answer to the shortcomings of large schools and the isolation of teachers and students. Forming small groups, which help to provide identity and a sense of belonging as a vehicle to process new information and experiences and to address communication among stakeholders, can provide an essential foundation for school reform (p. 36).

Yet, as they went on to cite a survey of The Schooling Project (1994) which showed that "more than 40 percent of teachers surveyed seldom or never meet with colleagues and fewer than 20 percent meet 'frequently'" (p. 37), it became evident that teaming is not an easy solution. Indeed, there must be drawbacks to collaboration if so many teachers choose not to seek out their colleagues. In this study, my purpose was to see what I could learn about the advantages and disadvantages of team teaching and the elements of successful teams from the perspective of the teachers and the principal of one school where I had seen teams work successfully.

Method

There were several team arrangements at this school: grade level teams, subject teams, the Program Improvement Committee (PIC), and various co-teaching teams. The main organizational unit was the grade level team which consisted of the three to four teachers of a grade. Students were shared by the teachers. In some grades, each teacher taught all subjects, while in others, the teachers were semi-departmentalized. For example, in one grade, two teachers taught math and language arts and the other two teachers taught history and science.

The grade level teams met for one and a half hours after school twice a week, and during their planning periods when necessary. Each member of the team, including the team leader, was on equal footing with the others. The team leader was not paid anything extra, but was responsible for making sure the team met and for going to the PIC meetings. Sometimes the team leaders had to delegate tasks, but that was not really their role; the other members were expected to take on extra tasks when necessary.

The subject teams are for academic subjects as well as subjects of general interest, such as technology. These teams met bi-weekly and consisted of one teacher from each grade level who reported information to and from the grade level teams. The PIC team met bi-weekly and consisted of team leaders from each grade level team and the principal. They discussed common concerns shared by the teams, and the team leaders reported information to and from the grade level teams. Various co-teaching teams involved arrangements of special education teachers sharing the room with a regular education teacher for all or part of the day.

The physical design at the school was based on the team concept. The school was 23 years old and was originally an open school without walls. The school has since added walls, but not doors. The rooms for each grade were placed together around a shared open area where the whole grade could meet at one time.

The participants in this study were eight upper-elementary, regular education teachers and the principal, who had been at the school since its beginning. The teachers varied in years of teaching experience from a first-year teacher to a teacher with eleven years of experience. Half of the teachers had never taught elsewhere; of the teachers who had taught elsewhere, three had taught in non-team-teaching settings.

Each participant was interviewed individually at the school. There were no set questions, aside from asking for the interviewees' thoughts and feelings about team teaching. The interviews were conducted much like an ordinary conversation and varied in length, most being approximately twenty minutes.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed with pseudonyms. One interview with each of eight teachers and two interviews with the principal made a total of ten interviews. Elements about team teaching that participants discussed were separated into themes. Some themes covered subjects mentioned by only one participant; most themes had contributions from more

than one participant. In this way, all of the thoughts mentioned by the participants are discussed in this paper.

The themes were put into six categories. Category one covered the elements the participants saw as essential for team to work successfully. Category two included elements that they perceived as potentially leading to the failure of the team. A third category covered the benefits the teachers found working as members of a team, while the fourth covered the drawbacks of being part of a team. Category five examined the benefits of team teaching for students. Last, category six covered miscellaneous thoughts related by the participants.

Results

Elements necessary for team success

In almost every interview, one topic that was discussed was each teacher's perceptions of the elements necessary for team success, which included the personalities and behaviors of the members themselves, as well as certain things the school provided for the team in order for them to be able to work together.

The desirable personality traits centered around flexibility and the ability to communicate openly. A first year teacher said, "When I think of schools with teams, I think 'communication'." Almost all of the teachers mentioned honesty as a desirable trait.

> You have to be honest. You have to share your thoughts, your ideas. If something is not working, you have to be strong enough to say, "This isn't working. I don't know if it's working for you, it's not working for me. I need help, or maybe we could change the program and do it this way." . . . I think if people go into it not wanting their own way all the time, but at least offering suggestions, I think you can mold a program to benefit all that are involved if you're willing to share and be flexible yourself. [Helen]

One teacher remembered with pride that her team had been called the "slinky team" for their flexibility. Other desirable traits that were mentioned were having the ability to give and take, a sense of humor, confidence, and being open-minded. All of the teachers saw the personalities of the members as being very important to the success of the team.

> It's definitely the personality makeup. You have to have someone that's going to agree to work as a team. Someone that's going to want to go into their classroom and do what they want to do, regardless of your time specifications and what you plan, the team as a

> whole is just not going to work. You have to have someone who's a team player, who's flexible, and who's going to agree. I think if you get one person that doesn't want to be a part of the team, the whole team can just crumble. [Gina]

This touches on the behaviors that the teachers saw as necessary for team success. Some behavior characteristics that were mentioned were working for the team, sharing, and establishing trust. Being willing to compromise was mentioned by almost all of the teachers. Gina said, "You just have to . . . sit back at times and just listen to what others have to say and their ideas and their opinions. I think that's a big thing, just flexibility and just to be cooperative." One thing that was important to the principal was that teams worked to solve communication problems within the team. He related the story of how a team had faced a difficult period. Because the team members had confidence and were able to communicate and solve their problem on their own without his intervention, he felt they were a stronger team for it. Several teachers and the principal mentioned how appropriate team behaviors were encouraged by the principal's yearly presentation on how teams should work together. In all of the personality traits and behaviors, individuality is permitted within boundaries. The principal stated that he did not expect all teachers to be exactly alike: "I expect a person to teach based on their personalities, and the way they do things. I have no problem with that. I mean we all have our style, but at least we all want to be in the same ball park."

The principal pointed out that if the team members did not have trust and communication, there was really no point in preparing a supportive school design. Though school design seemed to be less important than the overarching concern about the cooperation of the team members, teachers did see certain things in the school design that made it easier for teams to be successful. Because the school was built to be compatible with team teaching, there was a "pod" for each grade level, which included a central meeting area. The four doorways for the teachers' classrooms opened off the central area and were about eight feet wide. The open doorways and central area allowed for a great deal of communication between and even during classes, as teachers could step out of their classrooms without leaving them unsupervised. One teacher mentioned how this made team teaching a lot easier than if they had a hallway or had to go down to the library to meet with all of the students. With the central area, the teachers could quickly decide to have a class meeting and discuss a particular problem. Gina said, "The way [this

school] is designed. I don't see how we could not team teach. . . You definitely have to be around each other all the time for it to work."

Another feature that many teachers saw as necessary was the time that they spent working with each other. Teachers were required to be at team meetings for one and a half hours after school on Mondays and Thursdays, with some variations amongst the teams. In addition, the special classes (art, music, and physical education) were scheduled so that at least once during the day, the teachers had a half hour free at the same time for planning. They also had lunch together, and all of the teachers who were regularly observed in this study did spend that time in the teachers' lounge rather than alone in their rooms. Most of the teachers mentioned that it would be more difficult to team if they did not have these times set aside to be with each other.

Another school practice that seemed essential to the teachers was the hiring procedure, especially given the degree of importance the teachers ascribed to the personality makeup of the team. There were two aspects of the hiring procedures that the teachers mentioned as being helpful to ensure having new team members who would work well with the team. One was that the teachers in the teams have a say in who is actually hired to teach. The principal narrows the field of candidates down to two or three; then usually the team interviews the candidates, and the principal hires the one whom they prefer. Several teachers said that having the team involved in the hiring was important. Bob said, "I think that helps a lot. Occasionally, you misjudge someone. I think if someone's going to really irritate you, you can tell from the first time that you talk to them that it's not going to be a good mesh."

Another part of the hiring practice that the teachers discussed is that during the interviewing process, candidates are asked about their feelings about working on a team. Kelly said, "We ask, 'Can you work in a team?' Naturally, everybody says yes because they want to get the job. But the idea is you have to be able to get along with people in order to work together." Several teachers and the principal appeared to feel that letting the candidates know beforehand what was involved in working with a team would have beneficial consequences because that candidate would be prepared and could make a conscious choice about working on a team.

The literature addresses elements necessary for team success. Several studies discuss the importance of teacher traits and behaviors for team success. Borg (1966) pointed out that many

of the traits that seem beneficial are also necessary for traditional teaching, but that "certain characteristics are desirable that may be relatively less important in the conventional classroom. Such characteristics as flexibility, ability to cooperate and work effectively with other adults, organizational skill, consideration for others, and ability to accept constructive criticism" (p. 50-51). Heckman (1996) and the teachers in his study mentioned flexibility, humor, trust, and compatibility and noted that teachers do not have to be friends to work well together, but the teachers felt that they did need to have a shared philosophy of teaching. Shillington (1994) presented an interesting variation in her study of 92 middle school teachers and 22 principals. She analyzed the personality types and the phase of development of teams. She noted, "A majority of principals (72%) reported that they used 'personality' as a basis for team assignment yet none reported knowing their own personality type nor that of the team members" (p. 50). She felt that the principals could use personality instruments in "reducing the chief cause of team failure, personality conflict" (p. 51). Additionally, she noted that when team members were too different in personality type, they were less satisfied; yet,

> survey teams reporting 'self-selection' rather than principal assignment to teams were significantly more likely to be found in the lower team phase ratings. . . The lower functioning of self-selected teams, whose members are likely personal friends beyond professional activities, may be related to reluctance to disrupt high comfort levels by voicing opinions conflicting with the majority (p. 51).

The studies by Boloz & Blessing (1994) and Heckman included the anxiety that the teachers felt about forming teams. The anxiety centered around fears about personality conflicts. However, none of the studies discussed the hiring practices of the schools.

Boloz and Blessing recommended having common planning times and classrooms that are located in the same area of the building; Erb & Doda (1989) declares them an absolute necessity. Borg (1966) found that among the five greatest problems facing the principal in team teaching were arranging space for teams and making a suitable schedule. He felt that it was generally recommended that teams meet during regular school hours and found that the majority of teams in his study did not meet that standard. The school in the present study also did not meet that standard, and while many teachers mentioned a common planning time as essential to teaming, the after-school meetings were not noted as problematic. Shillington (1994) pointed out

that, although there was a great deal of overall satisfaction on teams, there was dissatisfaction with regard to the amount of time available.

Ehman (1995) noted that leadership was essential to the team process, especially from the principal, and Trimble and Miller (1996) made a recommendation that teams be formed with strong leaders. While strong leadership may have been present at the school in this study, leadership was not mentioned in the interviews even in discussions on how team leaders were picked.

Elements that cause team failure

While several teachers noted that each teacher is a different person and has unique qualities, traits that lead to division in the team cause problems. This included non-communicative and egotistical behavior and traits such as sarcasm and cynicism. In discussing a presentation on teams he makes every fall, the principal mentioned specific behaviors that are not appropriate.

> [When] you get someone on the team, you're all discussing something, and this guy's reading the sports page. Or you get someone "stone face": whatever you come up with, they're against it. "No, there's no way that's going to work. We did that fifteen years ago; didn't work then, it's not going to work now." Well, what's happening to a team if you've got someone like that? It gets annoying. [principal]

He and several teachers pointed to one teacher who had been dismissed for her lack of teamwork as an example of behavior that is divisive for a team.

> I can think of one particular situation from all the years I've been here, one teacher really was not a team player at all. She would use the team members to get information. She would use the team members to set up an operation and materials and display and so forth. Then this person would send the rest of the team out with the kids for recess or something during the time when she had invited parents to come in and see these things; and basically it was patting herself on the back, "Look what I have done", not giving people credit for what they had done. . . [principal]

Another teacher who had seen the problems with that same teacher, commented:

> [Team teaching] has to be done with people who like to team, and I do think there are teachers who want to teach independently, in that they want to have their own agenda and

> schedule. It's just a difference in personalities . . . [This teacher] decided she was going to be Teacher of the Year . . . So it was almost, I can show everyone that I'm better than everyone else here. And I think that's like 1% of the teachers who would do that. That kind of person should be in a school where there are doors, and you don't have to mingle and talk and do all that stuff if you don't want to.

The principal and others stressed that one reason that teaming had always been discussed in hiring interviews since the beginning of the school 23 years ago was to determine if the candidates were interested in teaming. The principal stated that he respected teachers who did not want to be part of a team, but it would be better for them to teach elsewhere.

One teacher, who had written her master's thesis on her own experience forming a team at another school, felt that teams should not be imposed on teachers by a higher authority, but rather that it should be their own choice. She said, "[Teaming] was not forced by the principal. So I think that's a very important ingredient. Because if you mix two personalities that aren't cohesive, it's not going to work." She did feel that the hiring practices at this school were necessary to ensure that the teachers, not just the principal, had a say in the choice of team members.

While the literature on teams focuses more on the previously discussed issue of what is essential for team success, one study showed some attention to the principle of teaming not being imposed by a higher authority. In a school which was undergoing a reform movement studied by Heckman (1996), the principal allowed teaming as an option for the teachers who wanted to try it. The teachers chose teammates by a written survey prepared by the principal, rather than the principal using either intuition or the personality tests of the type recommended by Shillington (1994) and by Erb & Doda (1989), who stated that "mandating that teaming will occur simply will not suffice. It is crucial that some type of personality, leadership style, or teaching style measure be used to help with staffing decisions" (p. 118). Hiring practices were not mentioned as a form of allowing teachers a voice in finding suitable members of teams.

In her essay on team teaching, Bergen (1994) noted some problems, gleaned from numerous sources, that can arise in teams:

> the dynamics of team interactions are not taught and little guidance in facilitating the team process is provided; it is difficult to integrate the interests, values, and methods of a

> group of diverse professionals; when differences occur, the team lacks skills in resolving and learning from those differences (p. 2).

Erb & Doda also noted that "attempting to team without adequate staff development in such aspects as team skills" will lead to failure of teams (pp.116-117). The principal in the school in the present study mentioned that funding for summer workshops was no longer available as it had been in the past.

Benefits of being a member of a team

All teachers spoke positively about being on a team, whether or not they had experienced teaching elsewhere, and this theme was discussed most frequently of all the themes. Teachers and the principal noted several advantages. One was being able to share instructional ideas, information, and experiences.

> I think working in a team . . . you learn different teaching styles and ways to approach teaching. Again the different perspectives for different situations, ideas are generated, and I think that leads to a stronger teacher. . . it was scary at first, but you learn so much from the other person. They have had experiences that you haven't had. Even though you may be teaching a certain subject area, they may have visited a certain place that you're talking about, and you're seeing it only from the book perspective or from a library book or reading something from the encyclopedia, whereas that person may have been there and can share pictures or experiences with the class. [Helen]

Two teachers spoke of competition they had seen working elsewhere, the absence of which they enjoyed in a team school.

> [Sharing is nice] especially if you're really weak in an area. I'm terrible in art . . . I don't know what I'd do if I had to come up with art ideas. [Julie] has a thousand art ideas, so she shares ideas. So she doesn't mind if my walls have the same art activity as her walls, whereas at other schools, teachers would really get all upset if something was on their wall and the next week it was on your wall. It would be like, "Why are you doing that?"[Bob]

One teacher said that at another school, a colleague had told her she could use his material if she copyrighted it. She felt that at other schools teachers could be territorial.

While all of the teachers felt that this sharing was a boon to their everyday teaching, additionally, the principal and some of the teachers, but not all, felt that it led to a savings in time spent planning. When asked if team teaching saved time, one teacher said:

> Yes, because I think if someone has a good idea then they'll say, "Here, try this, that would be a good history lesson." Much more so than if you were all by yourself, and you said, "OK, I'm going to teach this," and you have to come up with everything all by yourself. [Kelly]

The greatest aspect of teaming that all teachers discussed was the professional and personal support received. One teacher pointed out that the feeling of being friends made it all the more likely that the sharing would take place. Several teachers mentioned the benefit of being able to bounce ideas off of another person or to share feelings about teaching.

> It's great as far as support goes, and you need that. Rather than just shutting your door and just planning a lesson and having it either go really well and you want to share it with someone and there's no one there to share it with or if it flops you want moral support, you know, "Oh my gosh, I really spent a lot of time planning this thing, and it was horrible." [Gina]

Several teachers spoke of having the feeling that they were not in it all alone and that it made their job more personal because they had companionship.

> The benefits [of teaming] are that . . . you're not isolated. I've worked in schools where there's no team teaching, you go in in the morning and close your door . . . If you have a problem . . . it's all sort of yours to solve by yourself. If you're teaming then you get more ideas, you get to talk to another teacher, you get to let off a little steam and get new ideas and make copies of whatever you or she is working on. It's just somebody else to talk about your job with. I think that's probably the main benefit because teaching can be kind of isolating if there isn't a built-in structure. . . [Bob]

The principal felt that the team was almost like a family that felt concern for all members when anyone had a personal problem, "whereas if it's just a person off in the room, you have a school where it's hard to cry out . . . , but you can to a small group, and they will be understanding."

This support was especially important to the new or first year teachers. Two teachers said that they had had absolutely no materials when they started and everything came from their colleagues, and others said that the support makes it easier for first year teachers.

> I think coming in as a first year teacher, if you're on a team that's willing to share, I think it can mold a teacher quicker, faster than they just came in and were thrown into the pit by themselves. It's such a strong support for a person. And your first year of teaching is a scary, scary experience. [Helen]

Another aspect of teaming that the one teacher mentioned was that they could rely on each other in an emergency. This was primarily due to the team-oriented design of the school, with the open doors and adjacent classrooms. Teachers can hear if there is a problem in another room, and can help another teacher without leaving their students unsupervised.

When asked, one teacher felt that being on a team allows teachers a larger voice in the school than they might have as individuals. "[If] somebody says, oh, 'math scores are going down' or something, we can kind of get together and say that we as a group are using this approach and we like it, and then it's better that just individual voices." [Bob]

The central theme of support from teams is found in the literature as well. In his study on a middle school converting to teams, Ehman (1995) stated, "Most teachers drew great satisfaction and professional support in coming to know and work closely with other professionals" (p. 21), and that teams decreased teacher isolation. In a survey by Shillington (1994) of 114 middle school teachers and principals, 86% of the participants reported satisfaction with teaming. Heckman (1996) found in his study of one school that "all of the participating teachers were pleased with team teaching and appreciated the opportunity to share their knowledge and skills with their peers and to work collaboratively" (p. 49).

In a study on teachers that were not in teams, but were working collaboratively in 3 schools, Cousins, Ross, & Maynes (1994) found that "colleagues benefited greatly from the collective generation of ideas; enhanced communication; willingness to seek and give aid; improved practice and enhanced repertoires of techniques; and in some cases, educational philosophy and consistency and unity in organizational goals" (p. 460). The teachers there also noted benefits of pooling resources and that the principal was more likely to get new material for

a team than for an individual. In that study, as in the present study, there were differing opinions as to whether or not time was saved.

While Boloz & Blessing (1991) showed a non-team environment of competition and territoriality as seen by some of the teachers in the present study, other studies pointed out that the benefits that teachers feel in team situations oftentimes occur in non-team situations. Cousins, Ross, & Maynes found in a non-team school that "aid to new teachers came in all forms and levels" (p. 450). Charters (1980) found that although there was much variation from one school to another, "teacher isolation from colleagues was not the rule in the conventional schools" (p. 10).

Additionally, though teachers appeared to be satisfied in some of the smaller studies that are similar to the present study, a larger study by Charters (1986) comparing 14 teaming and 13 non-teaming schools, found "no sign of the higher levels of autonomy and job satisfaction in team-organized schools that had been so important a finding of the antecedent research" (p. 55) and instead "learned that teacher autonomy and job-career satisfaction were closely linked to conditions of the school's managerial system" (p. 56). In that study, teachers felt less satisfied and autonomous if the principal was a strong influence in the classroom; satisfaction was increased if the teacher felt the team did have a larger voice in the school. Though it was not discussed during these interviews, observations of the school and other conversations with teachers there suggested that this principal has a policy of non-interference, which may contribute to teacher satisfaction that is not in direct relation to teaming.

Drawbacks to being a member of a team

Some drawbacks seem inherent to the team teaching situation. As noted above, almost all of the teachers felt that teaming would be difficult if there were strong differences in personality and philosophy.

> I think the biggest problem [with team teaching] is when you don't get along with the people that you're teaching with. I haven't run across many situations like that, but. . . sometimes you just run across people who are disagreeable, and you don't want to have to sit down and decide anything with them. . . If you see a teacher who doesn't really respect children and you sit down and talk about the kids and they're going, "So and so's a jerk and I hate him and blah blah blah," and you're saying, "I don't want to hear this, I don't

> want to hear teachers trashing kids." That can be difficult, you just kind of have to sit down and hear that out. If somebody's not responsible, not dependable, not getting stuff in, you have to exchange grades and homework and who's going to call a parent, who's going to keep a child in for recess, and stuff like that, and if somebody's always forgetting, that could be a disadvantage . . .[Bob]

All of the teachers observed that teaming requires compromise. Many aspects of day-to-day teaching have to be agreed on by the team. This necessitates ceding some control of one's schedule and even ideas to team decisions.

> I suppose there's less control in the team just because you always have to consider someone else's feelings or philosophy or whatever, so you can't always just say, like you might if you were on your own, might say, "Bag math today, we're at a good point in this read aloud, I'm just going to read for the next forty-five minutes." So it's really just yourself that you have to answer to; whereas if you're teaming, you do have to at least ask the other person, "Is it okay if we skip this today? [Bob]

This can be particularly troubling with differing needs for structure. Being on a team can require more flexibility than some teachers might like; one teacher who liked to do writing workshop at a certain time of day noted some minor difficulty in having to adjust when the group decided to change the schedule. But some teachers felt, to the contrary, that teams allow for less flexibility than one might like.

> Some of the disadvantages [of teaming] are I think if you're a structured person and you stay on your schedule that your team plans, that's good; but if you want to be spontaneous, then sometimes you can't because you have planned things. So for me that was one disadvantage, because I'm fairly spontaneous. So I've had to stick to the schedule. [Julie]

This loss of spontaneity was one benefit that teachers who had taught elsewhere had enjoyed as teachers of a single group of students. Two teachers felt a great loss in the control over time, both in terms of being able to spend more than the allotted time on a unit, and in being able to simply decide as a class to do something special. As Bob noted, when he had his own class all day, "If you want to have all Jefferson day or all pink day or all math day, you can just say we're going to do this. We'll work for four hours today on our dinosaurs, and forget about

math." And Gina stated, "If I have some sort of project the kids are doing, or they didn't get it right away, I need more time. That's when I feel kind of stifled."

The other benefit missed by a teacher who had had one class of children all day when teaching at another school was the loss of intimacy felt with one group.

> There are some times when I just wish I had my own homeroom and had them all day. Especially when the kids are younger, you know, you're the teacher, you spend more time with them than their parents, and it's a great feeling to get to know a class so well. It's like you're everything for them, and there's a lot that you can do. It's a real neat feeling to have a great class going, to work through something and not have to say, "OK, our fifty minutes is up, go someplace else, I'll see you at the end of the day." [Bob]

A different side of the time issue is that, as noted before, some teachers felt that teaming saved time spent planning, but at least two teachers felt that teaming took more of their time than they would spend otherwise. One team leader noted that although time was saved for everyone on the team when one person did a job for everyone, for that one person, more time was lost. This was particularly felt by her because, as the team leader, she took on more jobs. She appeared to feel some frustration that she was not better at delegating tasks and preferred for team members to volunteer.

Although most teachers felt that the team-oriented design of the school was beneficial for the teams, several mentioned that were some drawbacks to the physical layout, especially with regard to having no doors. Three teachers shared their conflicting feelings about doing hands-on activities; they felt that it was good for the students, but felt guilty for making it noisy for the other teachers. Two teacher said that they would prefer having a door.

The literature presents some similarities in teachers' feelings about teams. Cousins, Ross, and Maynes (1994) presented some teachers who felt that teaming saved time and others who felt that time was not saved, as we have seen in the present study. Of greater import were teacher fears about personality clashes. In a school that was transitioning into teaming, there were initial fears about being placed with someone "whose methods and practices differed" (Heckman, 1996, p. 39). One teacher in the school in that study stated, "There are personality differences. I think we need to be aware and acknowledge that there are those teachers we don't enjoy working with. In the long run, there is a certain amount of joy that goes with what we're doing . . . And if you

don't enjoy being with someone, it's very, very taxing" (p. 41). Boloz (1994) also noted initial fears that teachers had about team members; and concluded that there will be friction and a need for compromise and respect. Bergen (1994) stated from her own observations and from numerous other studies, that "some professionals participate more fully than others, and team meetings often lack meaningful or productive discussions or decision making" (p. 2). There is the possibility that some team members will not be team-oriented. Though "there was relatively little evidence of active resistance to perceived threats to individuality, privacy, and autonomy. . . . some resisted passively, and thereby added stress to team process" (Ehman, 1995, p. 21) This concern teachers might have about not wanting to give to a group or lose some of their "territory" extends even to non-permanent collaboration. In the study on teacher collaboration by Cousins, Ross, and Maynes (1994), a principal stated that some teachers did not like having to give up part of their 'domain' in planning and evaluating a unit (p. 453).

While the teachers in the present study shared a concern about personality differences, there were several aspects of teaming that caused teachers in other studies problems that were not mentioned by the teachers in the present study.

In addition to intra-team conflicts, a study by Ehman (1995) showed inter-team conflicts in one school that was converting to teams. Relationships between former friends who were not put on the same team were weakened, and teams became competitive towards each other. "The central tension was between building and maintaining distinctive team identities that would promote bonding and identity within teams, and the ethic of cooperation and sharing across teams" (Ehman, p. 16). While over-identification with teams was a problem in that study, Erb & Doda (1989) included reinforcing team identity with symbolic clothing and ceremonies in their recommendations to ensure team success. In the present study, this aspect of teacher identification teams was not seen as a necessity nor a problem. The principal discussed sharing across grades and even across schools within the district as being a benefit of teaming, though it took place far less frequently than intra-team sharing. No teachers mentioned inter-team conflicts, although several mentioned that different teams worked differently. Perhaps there was less likelihood for conflict at the school in the present study because teams were long established and were determined by grade level. Even in the case of teachers who did switch teams, there did not appear to be feelings of conflict between teams.

Another problem presented that could result from teaming was due to the ideal of decentralization of decision-making. Teachers felt "pressure and burnout resulting from so many new required decisions and actions" (Ehman, p. 20). This also was not mentioned by the teachers in the present study.

Although leadership was not discussed in these interviews at all, the possibility of its being a troubling issue does come up in the literature. In a study of one school that had begun teaming, Ehman (1995) stated that "leadership will rotate to new individuals . . . This adds a significant element to what it is to be a teacher. . . [it] brings the expectation that the teacher role includes leadership of peers" (p. 23); the implications are that this will be pleasing to some or many teachers. However, in Borg's study (1966): "The vast majority [in 1966] of teams . . . have either no official leader or . . . a chairman who conducts meeting but has little or no administrative authority . . . These data suggest that most teacher teams prefer to operate as a group of peers . . . [and] that the teacher team may not be able to serve the function of providing intermediate levels of recognition or administrative authority as was attempted in a number of the early team teaching experiments" (p. 29). Therefore, the expectation of leadership roles may or may not come to fruition in the school studied by Ehman. Despite the fact that leadership is mentioned frequently in the literature, one study suggested that this issue is perhaps of minor importance to teachers, especially in comparison to the more frequently perceived benefit of team teaching, supportive interaction with colleagues. In a study of surveys collected from 701 teachers, Kershaw and others (1994) reported that communication, support, and work load rank in the top five most important factors in their quality of life, while leadership was "consistently ranked as among the least important" (abstract).

Although one teacher in the present study mentioned the benefit of having a larger voice in the school as a member of a team, potentially teachers could be frustrated in teams if they expect this. Erb & Doda (1989) said that teachers who have begun teaming will "expect to have a greater say in the making of buildingwide decisions" (p. 116). However, Charters (1986) "failed to find . . . an increase in teacher-group influence on school policy" (p. 55) in a study of 14 schools which were implementing teams.

Benefits of team teaching for students

Teachers mentioned that one way that team teaching benefited the students was that the teachers were able to teach more effectively due to their collaboration. As mentioned earlier, teachers saw sharing as one of the primary benefits for themselves, and several noted that this can also help the students. The principal pointed out that designing better lessons was one of the purposes of the team meetings. "A person should come prepared with some materials that they know is available to them and add onto that and modify that and maybe come up with a better product than one person. They have wheel, it's just an adjusting of the spokes. . ." One teacher noted the particular difficulty in amassing the supplies necessary for hands-on activities; she believed that this was made easier and therefore was more likely to happen when teachers worked together. Another teacher pointed to the fact that with several teachers teaching the same subjects, ability grouping is possible.

> Just technically I think it's a good idea. There are some skills that I think can be delivered better when you have ability grouping. Not for everything, but if you have kids in the 5th grade, you might have ten who are reading on a second grade level and 10 who are reading on an 8th grade level, there's very little you can do to meet the needs of all those kids in one class . . . But if you have two groups, 20 that are at 8th grade and 20 that are 2nd grade, or around that, I think you can provide more effective instruction for kids just by taking advantage of that." [Bob]

As another benefit to students, several teachers mentioned that more than one teacher knew each student. "Everybody feels that they own all of the kids. You don't just have 25 of your own but have all 85 that we're concerned about" [Julie]. The teachers were able to pool their knowledge about what they know about a particular student and ideas they had for helping the teacher and the student.

> I think it's getting other people's perspectives about problems. I mean if you're having a problem with a child and someone else is seeing the same thing in their class, you can sort of put your heads together and come up with a plan. I mean we have come up as a team with several plans, behavior plans for children, doing some positive things to get them on the right track. I don't know if that would happen if I was on my own. [Julie]

Discussions about children were mentioned also by the principal as a regular part of team meetings; this could take place because of a particular situation that a teacher wanted to resolve, or as part of a rotating schedule so that the needs of each child were discussed at some time.

Several teachers discussed the increased interaction available for students with both their peers and their teachers.

> I think it's good for kids too, to see different teaching styles and especially kids who have a rough time in school. You know, if they come in and they have a little problem with you, they get to go to the next class and they won't have already had problems with that teacher, kind of a fresh start. I've heard a lot of times, teachers will talk about someone as a behavior problem, and someone else will say, "He's just fine with me in math class." So it's kind of a little area of fresh start for the child, which I think a lot of kids like.[Bob]

One teacher noted that in working together the teachers were modeling the cooperation that they so often stress with students.

> Number one, you're a role model for your students. You're asking your students to work in teams and be a member of a group, we're modeling that for our students. We don't get up and yell at each other at a team meeting. We talk things out and share our feelings with our students. Being open and communicating with each other is very important, whether it's in front of our students or not. [Helen]

The principal felt that the school as a whole was a stronger community which was of benefit to the students.

> I think if the team of individuals are getting more support, that's going to elevate them to a higher level and therefore the support that I'm getting as well as giving can be at a higher level. . . I want [the teacher] to be successful. . . I want hopefully to have people interacting and working with each other to understand each other, feel good about each other, speak kindly to each other, and those types of things, and just have a good atmosphere all over. I think if those things are happening, then we're going to get a better job, the children are going to be the ones that benefit from something like this.[principal]

In the literature, attention is given to showing the benefits of team teaching for students also. One focus in the literature is on measurable academic achievement, but it is not conclusive. In a case study of a Navajo school, a comparison of the School-Within-A-School (SWAS) team

and the rest of the school which was not in teams, found a "higher student achievement within the SWAS indicated by scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, [other standardized tests], and assessments of attitudes towards reading" (Boloz, 1994, abstract). However, Scholz (1978) found in an international study, "no clear superiority or inferiority of team teaching in achievement changes in any particular subject" (abstract).

Many studies did note the benefits of students being able to interact with more teachers and peers. Boloz noted an increase in camaraderie between students, and Cousins (1994) saw that "students . . . benefited from exposure to a wider range of peers and the collective wisdom of their teachers" (p. 459). Cousins, Ross, and Maynes (1994) and Ehman (1995) observed that because teachers could pool their knowledge, they were more informed about the students themselves, and their instruction was more effective.

However, in a study by Arhar & Kromrey, the possibility that teaming contributes to middle school students having feelings of belonging was inconclusive. They found that in the middle schools they studied,

> interdisciplinary teaming may not impact student social bonding in all schools. Teaming appears to have the strongest impact on student-teacher relationships in low SES schools. . . Teaming provides conditions that may reduce the alienation of teachers . . .empowered, supported teachers are more likely to provide support for their students (p. 17).

As in the present study, a teacher in Heckman's study (1996) noted benefits of modeling cooperative behavior. She stated, "I felt as if we were good role models for our kids when we talked things out in front of them . . . the children felt very stable that we were both together. . . they knew we supported each other" (p. 44). Bergen (1994) noted that many teams fail to communicate well; however, "if teachers can provide good models of such teamwork, students may go on to demonstrate those skills in the larger community and the world" (p. 4).

Miscellaneous topics related team teaching

In the interviews with the teachers, there emerged several topics dealing with the concept of teaming as a whole. These were topics that related to the history of the school and the various team arrangements there. They talked about what typically happened in team meetings and some ways that teams differed.

The principal talked about how the school had begun with the team concept as it related to the education program of Individual Guided Education, the other parts of which are no longer being used. He agreed to become principal if he could select the faculty, and the selection process included getting teachers who wanted to be on teams. The training for working in teams was supported by the central office, but is no longer. The teams are grade level (although a teacher mentioned that they had had combination grades in the past), and each team had a leader chosen by the principal. One teacher explained that generally he picks the leader based on who has been there the longest, unless that person is not a good leader. He emphasized the equality of the teams and stated that the leader has no more authority than the other members, but does have the responsibility of getting the team together for meetings. He expects teams to reach a consensus and then follow through with it, as opposed to an individual teacher agreeing with the group and then actually doing something different.

The teachers and principals described other teaming arrangements, such as teaching in the same classroom, that are not covered in this study, and also the various groups in the school, such as the PIC meetings. The principal mentioned that the PIC meetings were only for items that were pertinent to all or most of the teams; when items came up that concerned only one or two teams he would plan to come by and talk with those teams at their team meetings, rather than discussing it with all of the team leaders at the PIC meeting. He and one teacher stated that this was efficient, and that was one of the reasons he liked teams. He also mentioned an example of how working with teams allowed efficiency as well as a more personal connection:

> Yesterday, I made it round to all of the communities because I wanted to let them know that . . . they would have $1000 more to spend and to let me know what they needed . . . Now, that's something I could have just announced or put it in the minutes, but I felt they would have a few questions . . . Trying to think of all those things and write it up, it's easier to . . . just deal with it then. Also it's nice to see the smile on their faces.

The principal and the teachers discussed what typically happens in the team meetings, as well as some variations between the teams. He expects for members to bring instructional ideas to the group, work on the curriculum, plan for events, and discuss the progress of a few students. The team meetings do vary. For example, in the latter category, in the team meetings of one

grade level that were observed, the progress of specific children were not mentioned at the meetings, although discussions about them took place at other times. Whereas in another grade level, the team leader reported that they did discuss students in every meeting, and even filled out each report card as a group. These two teams also varied in that the meetings of the former were more casual and conversation sometimes veered away from school affairs. For the other team's meetings, the team leader stated, "We have a lot to accomplish. We usually go right to work . . . [and] use up our whole planning time, and I would say we are not off task that often." Variations in teams were also noted by the principal:

> You go to a team . . .they are all, it's amazing, somewhat different in a sense, and to go in and chat with them. You get to know people better. Hopefully, they will get to know each other better. . . . I feel like I get to know them better I think when you get to sit down in a small group and chat informally, and feel comfortable in saying what we need to say. If there's something that someone has a concern about I usually feel that it comes out, and we can deal with it.

Another aspect of team meetings noted by one teacher was that the beginning of the year meetings were particularly important in terms of evaluating the program and deciding what to keep and what to change. In this way, he thought disagreements or differing ways of teaching could be adjusted for. One teacher also stated that planning was very important so that they would know what was expected to happen in the coming month and could avoid problems.

One topic mentioned by teachers, especially by those who had taught elsewhere, was that teams did not occur only in team-oriented schools. Supportive school policy was not seen as absolutely necessary. Several teachers thought that teams could arise simply from friendship formed between teachers or from teachers' observations that certain classroom dynamics would be easier to deal with if the teachers shared or exchanged students for some subjects. Also, one teacher spoke of a mentoring situation she had been in her first year of teaching as an example of other supportive relationships between colleagues aside from a team-teaching situation; she felt that it had been extremely beneficial and would be useful at this school.

Teachers and the principal included many general positive statements about enjoying team teaching. Several teachers did state, though, that their enjoyment was directly related to liking the other team members and that their opinion might be quite different if that were not the

case. No teacher indicated an overall dislike of team teaching. The principal summed up his purpose in having teams:

> We still find that having a team concept seems to be very effective in the sense of expediting, getting information out, people having a comrade right on their right or left they can talk with or see colleagues more closely and put in a situation where they can communicate and talk, rather than go back to my room and eat my lunch, close the door and pull the curtain.

In conclusion, the interviews showed that the teachers feel that there are several aspects of team teaching that they consider important. They discussed the elements necessary for team success, the most important of which were the personality traits and behaviors of the members of the team. These included flexibility, honesty, open-mindedness, confidence, cooperation, and compromise. Communication was emphasized as essential. Teachers and the principal felt that the hiring practices worked to ensure a good mix on a team. Appropriate school design was seen as important in two aspects: that the teachers were placed in close proximity to one another, and that their schedules had a common planning period, as well as time for meetings after school.

Teachers noted elements that caused team failure. These included undesirable traits and behaviors, such as egotism, non-cooperation, cynicism, and sarcasm. One teacher noted that teaming had to be the choice of teachers rather than imposed by a higher authority.

The most salient feature of the interviews was the participants' positive view of team teaching. All said that they liked it; reasons that were given included more effective instruction, saving time, having a larger voice in the school, being able to rely on each other in an emergency, and receiving personal and professional support. The latter aspect was the most apparent theme throughout the interviews.

Teachers also shared feelings about aspects they disliked about working in teams. One feature was that teaming requires compromise and collaboration, which can be difficult with a person who is dissimilar in philosophy or personality. Teachers remarked on some difficulties with regard to scheduling needs of the teachers. Also noted were the loss of benefits associated with teaching one homeroom all day: having greater control over time and having a feeling of greater intimacy with students. Additionally, some teachers felt that time was not saved by

planning together rather than alone. One team-oriented feature of the school, the open doorways, was troublesome for several teachers.

The participants noted benefits for the students. In their view, teaming allowed for more effective instruction, due to shared materials and ideas and the possibility of ability grouping. Teachers felt that they could know more about each child with input from other adults. Increased interaction for students with both peers and adults was seen as a positive effect. Also, one teacher noted that as teammates, teachers were modeling cooperation for their students.

Other comments in the interviews were related to the history of the school and variations amongst teams.

Overall, the teachers presented a positive view of team teaching, while noting that there were some drawbacks. No teacher gave a general negative picture.

Discussion

There are limitations to this study. Though the intent of the interviews was to get only the thoughts and feelings of the participants as they presented them, due to the conversational format of the interviews, some remarks and questions of the interviewer directed the interviews. Also, because the interviews did not include a standard set of questions, it is possible that a different picture would have emerged for some topics that perhaps some teachers just chose not to address. Another limitation is that the small sample size cannot give a definite picture of how members of a team elsewhere might view team teaching.

This study increased my understanding of team members' perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of working in a team, and gave a fuller picture of the elements that lead to team success or failure. This study and the literature suggest that team teaching works best when certain elements are taken into consideration. Teachers seem to feel very strongly about the importance of interpersonal relationships, and while they acknowledge that they do not have to be friends to work together successfully, their positive or negative feelings about the experience of working with another teacher either seem to be almost entirely dependent on the quality of the interpersonal relationships. In light of this, I was surprised not to find mention of the hiring practices of team schools in the literature. It would be interesting to see how hiring practices vary from school to school and what effect this has on success and failure of teams.

Also of interest to me is the aspect of leadership which is mentioned so frequently in the literature, but with differing positions. Finding the participants' opinions on that issue might be enlightening and helpful in determining the causes of success and failure of teams.

The success and failure of teams has implications in the larger issue of school reform. Heckman (1996) noted that the teachers' desire for homogeneity in the teams allowed for little diversity within teams. At the school in his study, diversity was not seen as a strength. The lack of diversity, one can assume, decreases the likelihood of teachers learning radically different methods of teaching from each other. In typical schools, teachers do not learn these different methods of teaching from each other because of their isolation, according to a study done with a limited number of schools by Tye (1981). He pointed to the isolation of teachers as evidence that school reform cannot take place in typical schools. Tye questioned the very notion that teachers are professionals because in an environment of isolation, they are not learning anything new. He pointed out that from pre-service training to being an isolated teacher in the classroom, there is no interaction between members of the school that would allow for change and reform.

The interviews in this study as well as observations made at the school support the notion that teachers prefer to be with like-minded colleagues and that many of the teachers use traditional methods of teaching. Yet, the team situation that Tye viewed as essential for reform was in place. Teaming appeared to be well-established and successful in terms of teacher satisfaction. The question arises then: if teachers view homogeneity within a team as very important to their satisfaction with teaming (and perhaps to their willingness to take risks), how will the reform via team teaching as envisioned by Tye take place? The diversity that would allow teachers to learn radically different ideas from each other might be the very element that would not allow them to function as a successful team. It is of interest, then, to investigate this issue of conflicting interests and gain insight into how teachers can learn from each other as professionals when they are quite different from each other both professionally and personally.

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Appendix A

Transcript of interview with Ann

Julia Shields: What I'm doing is basically looking at when teams were first started there were some studies done then that kind of compared teacher satisfaction and things like that and since I've been looking at it recently it doesn't look like a whole lot has been said so I just wanted to ask you your thoughts and feelings about working in a team and just kind of go from there. It's not anything official; it won't have your name on it; it's basically confidential, so feel free to say anything you want.

Ann: OK

J: So you started here two years ago? or a year and a half ago?

A: A year and a half ago

J: Do you need me to hand you anything?

A: Do you want to know about me working on the fourth grade team or like me and Tracy?

J: I mean like on the fourth grade team. You're kind of co-teaching with Tracy, right? I'm going to hopefully talk to all the fourth grade teachers so it would be more addressing that- the whole fourth grade. It's just a general conversation about that. I don't have any planned questions that I feel like I need to cover or anything. Just things that you like, things that you don't like.

A: Well, let me preface it by saying that the school where I was at before, I was a building sub so I wasn't part of a team per se, but they did not do any team teaching and it was just a very different environment.

J: Was that the same grades?

A: Well, I taught all grades, K-8. I was at the same school every day so I knew the school pretty well. I got to work in all the different grades, but nobody worked together really. There were some grades that worked together more than others.

J: Just on their own.

A: It would just kind of depend, like the fifth grade they switched for reading, math, and science, or no, one teacher taught math, one teacher taught social studies, one teacher taught science, and then everybody taught language arts independently. So they did a lot of work together because they were switching, but a lot of the grades they barely even talked to each other. It was different. I mean, I really like working with a team.

J: What are some things in particular that you like about it?

A: Well, I like the fact that we always have materials to use, and we share everything we do, and that varies from team to team, depending on how close the team members are. We are kind of fortunate because we're all around the same age, and we have a lot of interests, and we have a lot to talk about. Whereas some of the teams are a lot different, and they may work more individually; I think it just depends on the individuals on the team.

J: So you feel like because you all get along personally that it's more likely that you're going to share things in the classroom as well as outside.

A: Yeah like if someone does something that they really like, they come over and say hey let me show you this, whereas people who don't , not necessarily like each other, but you don't have as much in common, you don't talk to them as much, you may not be as apt to share. I just think we're kind of lucky in the way that it worked out. There's always stuff, like especially last year, my first year, so I didn't have any materials, anything, nothing, so it was nice to be able to get stuff, everybody gave me things and [interruption]

J: So when you came here it was especially a benefit because you were beginning and

A: It was great. Well, L. is a first year teacher.

J: This year she is?

A: She got hired I think the week school started. She had like two days to get her room together and she didn't have any materials. I got hired the week before school started and didn't have anything but everybody gave me things.

J: Do you think it changes anything like the amount of time you spend preparing for class?

A: Oh yeah. Your first year you spend a ton of time until you get worn out from it and then you cut back, it's true, because you could spend every waking minute thinking about school, but you can burn yourself out that way. You just have to stop and, everybody's different in how much they can take. I don't take stuff home with me. K. takes stuff home with her and does a lot of work at home. I like to separate and home is just for me, and not the kids. Keeps me sane.

J: So you manage to get it all done here.

A: Well, usually, there are times when I don't but I'm here later than most people are.

J: Do find that there's enough time in the day that you all can share ideas? Does this school support it in a way that they give you time?

A: Yeah, like we all have lunch together and we all have P.E. together. Other schools I worked at, they don't have their specials all at the same time so the teachers aren't on a break at the same time and here we are.

J: That's a big difference. You're all free at the same time, and in addition you have the meeting after school.

A: That's required basically. So we have to have meetings Mondays and Thursdays.

J: Do you think the amount of time spent in meetings is worthwhile in terms of the time spent planning or is it just good for community feeling?

A: I think it's both. We definitely chat with each other during meetings and talk about things that sometimes don't have to do with school but I think that's what keeps us close and so we know what's going on. There's a lot of talking that doesn't necessarily have to do with school, but also if we didn't do that we might not be as apt to share things. If I hear G. say something about a student who I have in my reading class, or K. has in her math class, we kind of piece things together that way.

J: So both of those aspects are thing you like, the sharing things that allows for planning to be easier and just the feeling of community within here? Is there anything else in particular that stands out that you like or don't like?

A: I can't think of anything that I don't like. Maybe if I had a teammate I just didn't agree with on philosophy or approaches to things that would be difficult. I haven't really run across that. I mean we don't all agree on everything, there's no way, but I think we're all fairly tolerant of our differences and we're similar in enough ways that we can definitely make it work. Whereas if somebody was working with somebody, I think K. was working one year with just one other teacher and they did not get along and it just made it for a much harder year.

J: That could make it more stressful, when generally teams would be less stressful.

A: It just depends on the makeup of the people and I know when we interview people, that was one of the things we talk about (when we interviewed for L.'s position), we're going to be working as a team, how do you feel about working with other people, sharing everything you do, you have to let people know that's what we're going to do.

J: I think K. had mentioned that for some people that would be a reason they might not be interested. Do you know why they would decide, just because they would be afraid they wouldn't get along?

A: I think if you're used to teaching one way, it's harder to switch. I haven't been used to anything else really so it wasn't hard, just like not having doors here, that is very different. When K. started here there weren't any walls, but I think if you're a teacher and you've been working somewhere for ten years in a room by yourself and just doing everything your way and not really compromising, because you do have to compromise, we all do, it would be hard to switch. I don't think I've ever met anybody, who interviewed with us who was turned off by it. But it is something you have to think about.

J: Any other thoughts or feelings? Anything else that stands out? Like with your particular population where it's important? If anything else occurs to you . . .

[End of tape]

Appendix B

Transcript of interview with Bob

Julia Shields: I wanted to talk about team teaching and I've talked to the teachers in the fourth grade team and some of the teachers in the 5th grade team. I still need to talk to W., and basically, what I'm trying to find out is what you like and what you dislike about team teaching and what do you see as benefits to yourself or disadvantages. I just wanted to get your ideas on that. I don't have a series of questions.

Bob: all right, the benefits are that you get, you're not isolated. I've worked in schools where there's no team teaching, you go in the morning and close your door, you open it at dismissal and you never hear anybody saying, you have no idea what novels they're reading, what science unit they're on. It's just closed door and anything could happen in your class and no one would ever find out about it. If you have a problem, you could have a huge range of abilities, it's all sort of yours to solve by yourself. If you're teaming then you get more ideas, you get to talk to another teacher, you get to let off a little steam and get new ideas and make copies of whatever you or she is working on. It's just somebody else to talk about your job with. I think that's probably the main benefit because teaching can be kind of isolating if there isn't a built-in structure then, like here at [this school], we have team meetings and all that kind of makes you cooperate with other people, but at lot of schools I've been at that don't have that, you know sometimes teachers who are friends will team, or if they've just worked together for a while, they will, but as a school, there's no structure set up to encourage that.

J: So in those schools sometimes it did happen naturally, but for you, would you prefer it to be an actual structure in the school rather than for it to just develop?

B: Well, I guess actually I would rather have it develop by the choice of the teachers. I know there are some teachers here that team for math, but not for language arts, and then the rest of the day they have their own kids. And I think that changes from year to year. Fourth grade is talking about doing something a little different next year than they did this year. So I guess I'd rather have it be the teacher's choice instead of a principal standing over you and saying, "Room 24 has to switch with Room 26 for reading" and that's all there is about it, there's no discussion. So I guess . . I think once teachers see the benefits of it, then it just becomes institutionalized, because

I think it works, like recess is good, so we do it. Jacks? are good so we do it. It becomes institutionalized because it's a good thing to do.

So I think the main benefits are that: that you get to talk to somebody else. I think there are just technically I think it's a good idea. There are some skills that I think can be delivered better when you have ability grouping. Not for everything, but if you have kids in the 5th grade, you might have ten who are reading on a second grade level and 10 who are reading on an 8th grade level, there's very little you can do to meet the needs of all those kids in one class. You can do it within your class, but then there are other problems with that. But if you have two groups, 20 that are at 8th grade and 20 that are 2nd grade, or around that, I think you can provide more effective instruction for kids just by taking advantage of that.

J: So for you, teaming the benefit is also that you can share can kids of different abilities. So it sounds like support, and ideas from other teachers, and benefits to the kids of being able to have different classrooms. Do you see any other benefits . . . or for kids particularly?

B: I think for kids it's good to see different teachers. I think sometimes, assuming adult teachers are good, it's good for them to see another face, to get up and go someplace different, to be in a different room and different teaching styles, some teachers are, you might have a funny, active, bouncy teacher, someone else is more serious and structured and it's good for them to see both kinds of teaching. Of course, if you have a bad teacher, then you don't want to team with that person. I've seen that happen too, where you just hate sending your kids across the hall, you really don't feel that person's very good. I guess that's where if you have some input on whether you're going to switch or not, or whether you're going to team with that person, you can cut back on it or something, but I think it's good for kids too, to see different teaching styles and especially kids who have a rough time in school. You know, if they come in and they have a little problem with you, they get to go to the next class and they won't have already had problems with that teacher, kind of a fresh start. I've heard a lot of times, teachers will talk about someone as a behavior problem, and someone else will say, "He's just fine with me in math class." So it's kind of a little area of fresh start for the child, which I think a lot of kids like.

J: Would you say that's a possible disadvantage then if you don't agree with the philosophy with the other teachers in your group?

B: Yeah. I mean, I think not if not everybody is good teacher or if there are real philosophical differences. Like if somebody's not going to do direct instruction and they've got a low reading group and they're doing antsy-fartsy love your book stuff, and I feel that they need to be in a structured phonetic based program, then I would have concerns about sending students to them. But I guess occasionally you don't think that some of the activities are appropriate even if it's a generally good teacher, and the kids complain to you or the parents complain to you, you kind of have to say, "If so and so's doing that I can't really speak to whether it's appropriate or whether the grade was right."

J: So you don't necessarily have to take responsibility for it.

B: No, I don't and you can be sympathetic to them and say doing whatever, writing your spelling words 25 times each, you don't think that's appropriate, but it's what so and so thinks is the best and that it's appropriate and so I guess the problem would be just if the person was just not cooperative.

J: Would you feel like sometimes you could approach a person that was on your team and maybe talk about their strategies or do you feel like ordinarily that kind of thing is another person's territory?

B: Well, I guess, I'm not very confrontational, so I haven't really gone to anyone to say I don't like what you're doing. Usually it happens in the beginning of the year, at least here, we kind of sit down and say all right, this is what we've done last year, should we stick with that? And there's some reevaluation of what was going on before, should we stay with it? We tried it this way and that was good, should we do the exact same thing or should we try and fix it somehow? And generally at the beginning of the year, you can kind of come to a compromise. Again, it depends if everyone is teaming, if maybe just you and one other teacher are teaming, the other teachers are doing more self-contained stuff, then it works well. When I was in 3rd grade, there were maybe two or three kids in each class for language arts that we just kind of informally said, well he doesn't really fit in with my group, would you want to take him? So there were just a couple of kids that moved around instead of like in 4th and 5th where when it's language arts time everybody goes to one of four places. Everybody gets switched around so you can kind of team just by saying well, you know I've got kind of a high and a low group, this kid's really too low for my high group and too high for my low group, is your high group moving just a little bit

more slowly and you've got this brilliant kid and I've got these two brilliant kids and maybe we can combine.

J: So there you had just a couple of kids who would switch, but here there's a reading class in each classroom and it's by level.

B: I kind of liked that that way too. It's nice. One thing I don't like about teaming is that I like having one homeroom that you get to know real well and you can do whatever you want. If you want to have all Jefferson day or all pink day or all math day, you can just say we're going to do this. We'll work for four hours today on our dinosaurs, and forget about math, whereas if you're teaming with somebody, you may be able to do that but you may not if everybody else needs to switch at a certain time or whatever then it's hard to say, "no I'm not going to."

J: So you would have less say really about what happened in your particular homeroom. Do you feel like you have more say, possibly, as a group in relation to other hierarchy, like the principal or something? In other words, do you feel like you have basically, less control in a team or more control in a team? Or is it just different areas of control?

B: Well, I suppose there's less control in the team just because you always have to consider someone else's feelings or philosophy or whatever, so you can't always just say, like you might if you were on your own, might say "Bag math today, we're at a good point in this read aloud, I'm just going to read for the next forty-five minutes." So it's really just yourself that you have to answer to, whereas if you're teaming, you do have to at least ask the other person, "is it okay if we skip this today?" You know, if you get along perfectly, then you can do that with another person too. Last year, I teamed with a special ed teacher and it was more inclusion and she was in there, really there were two teachers in the classroom almost all of the time. She had another room she could pull kids too. Before every lesson, we'd have to huddle and go, "OK you're going to take the high group over here, and I'll take the low group over here and we'll meet back and do this." And it was really, we got along super-well, so she could say, "I'm really tired of doing this, let's go outside and pretend we're the French and Indians and run around chasing beavers for awhile." And we got along real well. But if you don't get along with the person, or the person forgets what you agreed on, [talked about if one person would forget when to switch] then you have less control. So I suppose you really have more control when it's your own class,

but there are also times when if you have control over a situation which isn't really the best instructional situation the control really isn't much use to you. It's a trade-off.

J: Do you feel like you have any more say though just in the larger school community since you as a team sort of have a voice?

B: Yeah, when we get together and somebody says, oh, "math scores are going down" or something, we can kind of get together and say that we as a group are using this approach and we like it and then it's better that just individual voices. Like with the SRA reading, most grades are using it with the low group and when we get together and somebody says, "what are you doing for you remedial classes?" We can say, "As a group, we've decided this is what we're going to do." That's probably a better approach than if everybody is just saying, "I found this set of worksheets I'm using" or blaming it on the kids or whatever . . . So then you're not going to have one grade that comes together and says, "this is what we think you should do" and the other grade . . . Might have a stand-off which in this school I don't think really has happened . . ., but say second grade has to be whole language, third grade is saying phonics, and then you have some confusion about how those two come together.

J: What about if one person on the team wanted to do phonics and everybody else wanted to do whole language?

B: I guess it would depend. You could say, phonics person will do phonics for everybody's kids, so everybody sends three or four kids over to there. You agree on it. Last year, in 4th grade, I was doing my kind of spelling, A. was doing something more similar to what I was doing, but a little bit different. I have no idea what G. was doing, K. was doing something completely different. And I didn't care what everybody else was doing, but I got to do what I wanted to do what I wanted to do.

J: So there are sometimes when you may do something quite different from everybody else and that's fine.

B: They decided based on whatever worked for them, and even with that we switched, there was one boy who came to my class because he was just so much lower than what G. had that we went through a child-study and he was found not eligible so we said what kind of accommodations can we make. So we offered to take him into my spelling class which had three teachers working every day with three groups, with direct instruction going on so found something to work for

him. I think if you get along with the people you're working with, even if you're not dividing up your whole class into four groups and everybody's switching, you can still have some flexibility. Like, this one just doesn't fit here, could you take him in yours.

J: So it's like in third grade you took a couple of kids and moved them around and here most of the time you switch groups, there you kind of meshed the two ideas. You mentioned a possible disadvantage, can you think of any other drawbacks that you as a teacher might feel?

B: I think the biggest problem is when you don't get along with the people that you're teaching with. I haven't run across many situations like that, but there are, you know, sometimes you just run across people who are disagreeable, and you don't want to have to sit down and decide anything with them. That can be a problem then. If you see a teacher who doesn't really respect children and you sit down and talk about the kids and they're going " so and so's a jerk and I hate him and blah blah blah" and you're saying, "I don't want to hear this, I don't want to hear teachers trashing kids" That can be difficult, you just kind of have to sit down and hear that out. If somebody's not responsible, not dependable, not getting stuff in, you have to exchange grades and homework and who's going to call a parent, who's going to keep a child in for recess, and stuff like that, and if somebody's always forgetting, that could be a disadvantage.

J: Do you see a way that that could be avoided for a team to be more likely to have personalities that get along?

B: I think if the team is involved in hiring. That's important, and that happens here. [the principal] will choose, from whatever way he chooses, three or four people if somebody's leaving or a new teacher is added. The teams get to interview candidates and then talk to the principal. I've interviewed people I am just sure I would not get along with and we haven't hired them.

J: So you felt you had a direct impact on it.

B: Usually if the teachers agree on someone, if it's not one of these things where the teacher is being transferred and you have to accept them, but it's just a new hire usually he will do what we say. Usually we won't say, "candidate #3 is the best" and he says "Well, I rated that person worst". Usually, it's a pretty good match. I think that helps a lot. Occasionally, you misjudge someone. I think if someone's going to really irritate you, you can tell from the first time that you talk to them that it's not going to be a good mesh.

J: Do you see other things like hiring, having a say in the hiring of new teachers, or like in the physical school design or scheduling or whatever that is essential for a team to work together successfully?

B: I think that you have to have common planning time just to be able to get together and say, like what we were just doing now to figure out these buses, you have to have some common planning time that you can get together and work stuff out. If you're just by yourself then you could just do it at home or whenever your planning time is, but if you need input from other people then you have to have some time during the day where you can be physically in the same place.

There are sometimes when I just wish I had my own homeroom and had them all day. Especially when the kids are younger, you know, you're the teacher, you spend more time with them than their parents and it's a great feeling to get to know a class so well. It's like you're everything for them and there's a lot that you can do. I think it's less so with the kids who are getting older and they have other interests and are a little less attached to the teacher. It's a real neat feeling to have a great class going, to work through something and not have to say, "OK, our fifty minutes is up, go someplace else, I'll see you at the end of the day."

So I think if you can do kind of a combination of a team you know, math, language arts, having your homeroom still for social studies and science. We actually team for social studies and science. So I see another class, teach two history units, one to my class, one to W.'s class. But I still feel a lot more attached to my homeroom, and I use homeroom time to do even more history activities with them. I know that we've done a lot more than her class because we have two or three homeroom periods during the week and I can do whatever I want. I can do a read aloud, I can do team-building stuff, you know whatever I want. And I usually choose to do history activities because I like it and I know where I want to go with it. So we'll do a play, a little skit, or a game that maybe I would feel like I can't do that during class today because we have to cover the book; I can do some neater stuff, extensions of stuff during homeroom time that you get to do more when you just have one class. You have to say, OK the curriculum says cover X, I covered X but it would be really neat to these three other stories or something.

J: That is kind of like what you were saying earlier, when you don't have the class all by yourself, you can't just say, well let's do history for half the class

B: Even just things like when you're teaming, it's easier if a there's a problem or a child's crying for something, or somebody's had a fight, if you're teaming, you can say, "watch my class, I'm taking this kid to the office" or like now [describes teaming with special ed. part time teacher] at the beginning of the year, we felt like there was some very inappropriate touching going on between some students. A long weekend was coming up, [I was talking to the principal, talking to the counselor, talking to the parents] so I was running in and out, and since I was teaming, I could say, "just cover the class, start something, take them to music in twenty minute or whatever because I'm dashing around doing these things." And if it's just you by yourself, then it's really hard to do that. Last year, we had a student who was real disruptive, got in fights on the way in from recess. One day, he went marching in the room and started flipping over desks, cursing and as we were walking in, another teacher saw him and called the class into her room which we never do but you can have the occasional, "OK, everybody go into C. 's room" then you can just work it out with the child instead of having to try to drag that child who's flipping desks over pull him out of the room, you can just let him have his room and wind down and then ten minutes later he was fine but I couldn't let him stay in a room full of kids if he's flipping over desks and cussing so just having the flexibility, having like a backup plan, if someone sort of goes berserk, our plan is you guys all go next door and sit down.

J: It seems like that would be harder to do if you didn't already have a lot of contact with that teacher.

B: And there have been years when we had kids with severe problems, sometimes even medical conditions, where you know maybe a child is having a seizure or something, it really helps to have another teacher, so you can say, "cover my class, I need to go to the office or physically assist a student someplace"

J: That would be kind of nice. You certainly can't leave your classroom when you're self-contained.

B: And here we have assistants most of the time if someone said, "hey watch these kids, I've got to go" but you know in classes at other schools there is no assistance or they're separated, they don't have like pods so even if there's someone assigned to you, you may not know where they are. And if it's just you, you can't leave the class not covered.

J: So what's your experience teaching? How long have you been here? Where have you been before and what was that like?

B: I've been teaching 11 years. I've been here 6 years. I taught for four years in a pull out program for ESL and in California for one year.

J: So the ESL you didn't have your own room.

B: I was a classroom teacher for some of that time. Most of the time I was an ESL teacher, sometimes I would pull the kids out and sometimes I would go into the classroom. I would take a group and the classroom teacher would take a group; and it was actually a two way program [explains that] so that was teaming too.

The other advantage I think is that sometimes you just have teachers who are good at teaching something, you can have better teaching or develop an expertise. You can't learn to be great at everything. Like I've taught low language arts now for several years and I feel like I know that real well. I don't know as well the high language arts side of things. I've taught the high math group for several years, so I've got notebooks full of activities and I just have a better sense of where it should go and problems that come up with each. Whereas someone else has the opposite experience. You know, you don't want to get pigeon-holed as only being able to do one thing, I think there's something to be said for not having to reinvent the wheel every year. I like history and I suppose I could be as good a science teacher as I am history teacher, but I just happen to like it more and there are other teachers who like science more so it makes sense to take advantage of the strengths.

J: So here you share, it's almost departmentalized in a couple of subjects. So in California, you were in a self-contained room. That's really when you had your own room all day long.

B: Then after about half way through the year, I was complaining to another teacher about how I had some kids way above grade level and some kids didn't know their numbers in 4th grade and she said, "oh I have the same thing" and there was a math resource teacher there, a chapter one math teacher, and she said, "you guys could team and one of you take the high group and one the low group" and so there was a math resource teacher who kind of facilitated what should logically occurred to us as we're sitting there complaining about having such a wide group, but I didn't know, it was my first year. Somebody would take the high group for two weeks, and somebody would take the low group and then we'd switch. That worked out well, I don't know

if I would do it exactly the same way. You got to see all the kids and you got your time with the high kids and your time with the low kids.

J: So in that circumstance, it kind of happened, you just kind of decided on your own as a team what you wanted to do. But you didn't necessarily have, did you feel the same support, the same all-around collaboration that you have here?

B: Well, I mean not as much as we do here because we didn't have any team meetings. It just so happened the two of us were new and there was a teacher who had been there for a long time and he was one of these guys who just never did lesson plans because he had taught everything, and he just whipped off, if they were going to do the volcano, he would get out the volcano box, put it together, tomorrow we're doing the solar system, he'd get out the solar system box, and he was just nice enough to say on Fridays we get together and meet and just go over, chose his boxes and books and go, can I have a copy of this, copy of that? So we just kind of informally shared, well we didn't share, he gave us stuff.

J: Well, it sounds like he was especially helpful to you starting out.

B: Yeah, he was. I had no idea. The only thing I had ever done in science was read the book, you know, and I'm over here, doing round robin science reading, and next door they're going, "Ooh, ah, look how far that rocket went!", "Oh, neat!" and "Okay, paragraph 3. A rocket is defined as . . .". So then he showed us how to do rockets. But it was nothing the principal said to do, he just took pity on us, and said, "Oh why don't we have lunch together Friday, and I'll give you the stuff I'm going to do next week." He was very open to giving us his stuff. I think, too, once you go through that I'm more willing to share my stuff with people, teachers. You know, I just think we see the example is share stuff and not horde and go, "Did you steal that activity from me, argh argh argh."

J: Yeah, that seems like one of the nicest things about teaching.

B: Yeah, yeah, especially if you're really weak in an area. I'm terrible in art, luckily we have an art teacher, but you know, I don't know what I'd do if I had to come up with art ideas. J. has a thousand art ideas, so she shares ideas. So she doesn't mind if my walls have the same art activity as her walls whereas at other schools teachers would really get all upset if something was on their wall and the next week it was on your wall. It would be like, "Why are you doing that?"

[interruption, then interviewer thanked Bob, end of tape]

Appendix C

Transcript of interview with Helen

Julia Shields: So that was the thesis that you had made with several other teachers in your school?

Helen: Right, there were four other teachers on the team.

J: Did you come up with that idea together, to do that or did your school suggest that?

H: No. We came up with it together in a group.

J: That must have been a really strong team for you to get your master's together.

H: Yes. We had taught together two or three years prior to this in self-contained classrooms. But had done a lot of work together, planning units and that kind of thing.

J: Was that called a team?

H: We were known as the fourth grade team.

J: So were you expected to plan some things together or did you just do that on your own?

H: We just chose to do it that way. I mean, I think, indirectly it was expected, but no one ever said anything, but we just felt we worked well together and so we always chose to do things as a group, as a whole group and tried to make sure we worked around the same chapter in a book or same subject area.

J: That's one thing I'm interested in is to see if teams are something that would happen naturally, or if you need the structures that are like in this school, such as having time together, structures time to meet and so on. Or if sometimes it would just happen naturally.

H: In my old school, we did not have a set time because of scheduling, it was a problem and we didn't have a set time when we could actually sit down and meet. We chose to do that on our own, whether it was staying after school or talking at lunch. But here it's the ideal situation because you do have at least two afternoons blocked off when you can talk in your team.

J: So would you say that's one of the basic ingredients of teaming and that you all just had sort of an exceptional situation?

H: Yes. I think if there's a block of time, that's certainly going to help. I think we were a unique group. Another thing, I don't think that a principal can put a team together. I think it has to be the want, the desire of the teachers to make the team. When we decided to form the master's program, two teachers decided to team in the same classroom first. It was a co-teaching

situation, and then the other teacher and I decided to go on the other side of the school and share a classroom which had a partition. But it was not forced by the principal. So I think that's a very important ingredient, because if you mix two personalities that aren't cohesive, it's not going to work.

J: So what are some things. . . like in the beginning of this school, he chose teachers that wanted to be on teams and the teams were formed that way. From the beginning on, what do you think . . the principal's not telling anyone they have to be in teams, because there already are teams here, and I know that the teachers have a say in who gets hired to be on the team, would you say that's an essential ingredient, too?

H: I think so. Yes. I don't think it should be left strictly up to the principal to say, "I want this person." I think when I came in I spoke with B., who was new coming onto the fifth grade level. I spoke with him one afternoon, and then J. called me on the telephone and we chatted. I didn't meet W. until the first day of school. But I had contact with one of the members face to face prior to starting.

J: So they didn't have a meeting where you met all of the team. Those sound like two things: hiring new teachers and time to meet and choices for yourselves. What would be some other things that you would think really are necessary for teams to work?

H: There are so many different definitions of teaming. I mean we have a fifth grade level team, then J. and B. teach Social Studies, W. and I teach the science.

J: Oh, is that right? So you don't teach Social Studies? So this is a little more departmentalized.

H: So you have those kinds of teams. If I went into J.'s room and to teach a lesson, that's another kind of teaming. If we shared the same classroom, that's a different kind of teaming.

J: In terms of making some decisions as a group, and having team meetings where all four of you meet, and doing community activities and helping each other prepare units, just in terms of that, not necessarily sharing a classroom. What do you think would be most helpful to teachers or most necessary for successful teams?

H: One is honesty. You have to be honest. You have to share your thoughts, your ideas. If something is not working, you have to be strong enough to say, "This isn't working. I don't know if it's working for you, it's not working for me. I need help, or maybe we could change the program and do it this way." I think with two people working together, or four people working

together where ideas are generated, and I think if people go into it not wanting their own way all the time, but at least offering suggestions. I think you can mold a program to benefit all that are involved if you're willing to share and be flexible yourself.

J: Are there any other things that you think are most necessary, whether it's in school design, like having a say in the hiring of teachers, or whether it's a personality ingredient, other things that might be necessary for teams?

H: I have to say honesty, flexibility. It depends on the kind of teaching. The team teaching situation I was in, I saw it as a very positive program because if my co-teacher, Joan, was up teaching, I could sit back and while she was conducting the opening of the lesson, if I saw that students were confused, I could interject right then and help clarify information. Joan may think she's getting it across to the students, but you could read their faces and see from their faces and actions that they're not getting it. Another thing, I could go around and help individuals, or pull small groups while she's teaching and vice versa. That was a real strong advantage. Sometimes you miss things that are going on in the classroom. You're seeing more of the whole picture, rather than seeing problems that are building. And it also helps with discipline to have the two people.

J: You have a larger group, but you have two people. Would you say that you would prefer that, that sharing a classroom as well as sharing a grade?

H: I do. You're responsible for certain subject areas. I taught the math and the science one year, and the language arts and social studies another year, so you're exposed to all your subject areas, but you were switching around, in mid-year, you may change the subject area. You were aware of what the other teacher was teaching at all times. You're there. We thought going into it we would have the flexibility to leave the classroom, we found that we weren't leaving the classroom very much. We were staying in there to follow along with the lesson to help those who needed extra assistance.

J: Now is that something that could happen here?

H: I know this was an open school at one time, so I don't know if they could take out the walls so that you could have a situation like that. The classrooms would definitely have to be a little larger. I think they could do it, if they wanted to, but after investing all this money in the walls, I don't know if they would want to do that.

J: Do you feel that you have a say in things like that at this school, like at your other school, it sounds like, of your own initiative you all got this thing worked out. Do you think something like that could happen here?

H: I always think there are possibilities, certainly. If the fifth grade team felt like that would be beneficial, but again, it would have to be the desire of those involved to want to do it. I certainly wouldn't go up to the office and say I think we need to take the walls out, without consulting the other people. Some people don't feel comfortable. I know I was very scared the first time that I started team teaching, you really have to let your defense down, and you have to be willing to share, and when you're performing in front of a peer, it's difficult. It takes a while to get that comfort level. Once you get the comfort level, it's fantastic. You can see how much you can build and how many ideas you can generate and how your program can grow because you're willing be flexible and willing to change and share ideas. It's a risk taking situation.

J: But you feel like in this team everyone is able to contribute in that way and is able to let their defenses down, and that's sort of essential for each member of the group.

H: I think so, yes.

J: What do you think are the main benefits to teachers being in a team? What makes a teacher happy about being on a team? aside from what's required of them to be on a team, what are things that they gain from a team?

H: Number one, you're a role model for your students. You're asking your students to work in teams and be a member of a group, we're modeling that for our students. We don't get up and yell at each other at a team meeting. We talk things out and share our feelings with our students. Being open and communicating with each other is very important, whether it's in front of our students or not.

J: What are some things, that if you were on your own, that you would miss about not being on a team?

H: Being able to bounce my ideas off of others, sharing my concerns about a problem and I want someone else's advice. Sometimes we get locked into seeing a situation by seeing one view, and if you have someone to talk to or share that situation with, they can help you see it from another perspective. I think that's very important. I'm the kind of person, I like to be around other people. I don't like being at home and not talking to other people.

J: What were some ideas that you had written down?

H: I think we've talked about most of them. I think working in a team whether it's in the same classroom or whether it's working on the fifth grade level, that you learn different teaching styles and ways to approach teaching. Again the different perspectives for different situations, ideas are generated, and I think that leads to a stronger teacher.

J: So it's like you're getting things from other people.

H: Right. And as I said, it was scary at first, but you learn so much from the other person. They have had experiences that you haven't had even though you may be teaching a certain subject area, they may have visited a certain place that you're talking about, and you're seeing it only form the book perspective or from a library book or reading something from the encyclopedia, whereas that person may have been there and can share pictures or experiences with the class.

J: Do you think it's especially good for new teachers, or does everybody pretty much share . . .

H: I think coming in as a first year teacher, if you're on a team that's willing to share, I think it can mold a teacher quicker, faster than they just came in and were thrown into the pit by themselves. It's such a strong support for a person. And your first year of teaching is a scary, scary experience. Usually, it turns out you may be on a team of four, but you gravitate towards one person more than the others, and that person tends to be quote your mentor, but again I don't think you can pick someone to be your mentor. I think it's something that has to work within your team.

J: So it just sort of naturally happens, you could look to any of the three other people for other things. . .

H: Right, and it may not be that you gravitated just toward one, but in certain situations, you may go toward one, for some subject areas, you may go towards another.

J: So it sounds like overall, you are really pro team.

H: Yes, very much so.

J: And you just moved to this area?

H: Yes, this is my first year here at [this school].

J: When you were looking for new places to work, was teaming one of the things you were looking for in a school?

H: I did ask the question, it was not a big issue. Through the conversation, it came up that there was a fifth grade team, or the fourth grade team does this. I had the sense from talking to [the principal] that teaming was an important aspect of [this school] school, but again he was very open and willing to talk, whereas other schools I had been in were like, "We don't have any openings, good-bye." Even though he wasn't sure he had an opening, he was willing to talk to me and share [this school] and how he was about [this school].

J: So it wasn't like you had to go to a school with teams. Was it just an added benefit or did you see it as a pretty high priority? What was your feeling about that?

H: To be totally honest, I needed a job very badly.

J: So it wouldn't have been a deciding factor.

H: No. It was certainly a comfort level to know that they had teaming and [the principal] wanted me to speak to a team member prior to coming on board.

J: So it made you feel better about it, but it wasn't a necessary item. Can you think of anything else? [talk briefly about her thesis]

[end of tape]

Appendix D

Transcript of interview with Julie

Julie B.: So you're K.'s student teacher?

Julia Shields: I am. I'm finished. I did half a semester with her. It was a little unusual because I just came three days a week. So it took a lot of flexibility for her, and it was great working with her. It was fun being here. I hadn't been in a school that was so team oriented before. I taught seventh grade before for two years in Texas, and the school was not team oriented at all, and I felt that the teachers were really isolated, and there wasn't a lot of camaraderie. So I just thought it was neat here, and I'm always interested in community-oriented things, and so I wanted to see. My impression is that sometimes teams work and sometimes they don't and I wanted to get teachers' perspectives on what are the advantages and disadvantages of being a team and what sort of makes them work. is it school design, school support, or school attitude or that sort of thing?

JB: First of all, I really like working on a team. But I've only worked on teams where I've really gotten along well with the people. I've been fortunate. Maybe one time there was some personality conflicts. And I think if the people all get along well, then you have a really strong team. Also I think the mix of people is really important. Because I think sometimes some people don't enjoy the give and take of working on a team; they sort of do want to do their own thing. So that can present problems. If somebody has a big ego and isn't willing to compromise, it could be difficult.

So I've always been fortunate here at [this school] that everyone has been willing to give and take. I mean I think the advantages are great because everybody feels that they own all of the kids. You don't just have 25 of your own but have all 85 that we're concerned about. And we all just really help each other out and plan together and you know people's strengths are real evident and when we plan somebody might be good at typing and somebody might be good at planning the ideas, somebody's good at art, somebody's good at math, so we can sort of play on each other's strengths.

JS: So each person has something special to contribute?

JB: Right. So it's worked out really well for us.

JS: How long have you been here?

JB: Thirteen years.

JS: Thirteen years? And before that were you at a school that didn't have teams?

JB: No. Before that, well, I was three years in a middle school where we had teams but we really didn't work as closely as here. We weren't departmentalized. And before that I team taught with a person in a classroom. I mean the two of us shared a classroom and co-taught together, two classes in one room. And that worked out real well. But once again we got along real well. So I mean I've really enjoyed teams. Some of the disadvantages are I think if you're a structured person and you stay on your schedule that your team plans, that's good, but if you want to be spontaneous, then sometimes you can't because you have planned things. So for me that was one disadvantage, because I'm fairly spontaneous. So I've had to stick to the schedule.

JS: So when you would rather do your own thing, you stick with the structure? What about - That's interesting because I was almost thinking of it the other way. If you're a person for whom structure is real important to you, it seems like a fair amount of flexibility is required if you want to go with team wants. I know when I was teaching my unit, a few days we had to miss class because other things were going on, and I just had to make accommodations for that so. But if you're a spontaneous person, that doesn't bother you at all.

JB: No. Usually I'm willing to go along with it. Yeah, usually we plan at the beginning of the week or we know a month or so in advance what's coming up that's special. I think that's real important to be well planned, and then you don't have those problems or you can work around those kinds of things. So that is real important. I mean once in a while stuff will come up at the last minute. So I mean I just think working on a team is just great.

JS: So how often do you all meet?

JB: We meet twice a week. Mondays and Thursdays.

JS: Mondays and Thursdays, I didn't know if it was the same for all.

JB: Yeah, I think that's what they do for fourth grade.

JS: And at those meetings do you I assume it's the same as fourth. There is some pleasant talk and just community feeling and then there's some actual planning, long and short term.

JB: Right, yeah, we have a lot to accomplish. We usually go right to work. You know, we discuss children, their needs, conferences, that type of thing. Usually there's curriculum planning to do, I know right now there's especially when we're using test booklets for the Stanford 9 tests

and putting a schedule up for that and all. We do the report cards together and we meet as a group, too, to discuss all the behaviors of the kids as a team and not just do them on their own.

JS: Really? So every child has some part of the report card filled out by the entire team? That's interesting. That's a lot.

JB: Yeah, that's a lot. You know when you meet like the music teacher and the art teacher and get together with them and just any general business we have to get in to [the principal]. So usually we use up our whole planning time and I would say we are not off task that often. You know, once in a while.

JS: So you really get a lot done during that time.

JB: Yes, we do. I mean I would rather just not meet and just be in the room correcting my papers. I mean, I can get a lot done here at school if we didn't have to meet so much, but I don't know what else we'd do it we didn't meet.

JS: Well, that was one question I had about team teaching. I don't know if it's possible to compare, but just in terms of time spent planning, do you feel that the meetings actually save you time planning or are they just in addition to time planning? I mean if you were one your own, would you spend less time planning?

JB: I think probably I would because I mean you'd sort of be responsible for your own 22 kids and you wouldn't have to listen to someone else talking about a child that maybe you don't teach. Or you know making a phone call for that person, and if they're in your home room, but you don't really teach them, sometimes you call. So yeah, I think you would probable save time if you weren't meeting as a group.

JS: So the primary advantage of teaming would be what, do you think?

JB: I think it's getting other people's perspective about problems. I mean if you're having a problem with a child and someone else is seeing the same thing in their class, you can sort of put your heads together and come up with a plan. I mean we have come up as a team with several plans, behavior plans for children, doing some positive things to get them on the right track. I don't know if that would happen if I was on my own.

JS: In that way, it sounds like it benefits the kids.

JB: Yeah, it does. I think it does. I think I might otherwise just go to the phone and call the parents. I mean I guess I would come up with a plan, because I'm certainly an experienced

teacher, and that's just what you do, but I think it's good to have when you're out of ideas, people have some more to offer you. And you don't feel so alone, like you're in it all alone. You feel like you have companionship. I think basically the biggest advantage is each others' strength.

JS: What each person can contribute. Do you feel like that's fairly flexible, or do you get in roles? So you ever feel that that is limiting in any way?

JB: Not really, I never have. But like I said, I am fortunate to work with some really good people who have been willing to give and they aren't really set in stone what they want to do and they're willing to compromise.

JS: So you would see some personality traits as almost being necessary?

JB: Oh yeah, I think you sort of have to check your ego a little bit.

JS: And be confident, I'm sure, that your ideas are what you want. It seems like there's a lot of give and take that's necessary. And you all have a say in the hiring of people who come into your team?

JB: Yes, we have most times. I know this summer we hired H., but she was hired in the summer and I was out of town, so I didn't meet with her before [the principal] hired her, but usually we meet with the people we're going to hire and we get to select the person we think best.

JS: Well, do you think that's a necessary thing for teaming also? That the members would have to have a say in it?

JB: Oh, yes.

JS: So what other things as far as school design or management systems are necessary besides that?

JB: Well, I think as far as the physical layout of the building it helps to have a central pod where everybody can come together. I think that would be real hard in the hallway. You might have to go if you were all in the hallway and then like the middle school you might have to go to the library to meet. So this is ideal. Just pull everybody like say at recess, gosh, the kids were really rowdy today. We need to have a good team meeting about rules for soccer, and pull them all out and talk to them as a group. So I think the layout of the building does make a difference.

JS: Now were you here when it was without walls?

JB: Yes.

JS: How was that?

JB: It was different. The rooms were much bigger. My room went all the way back. And some years there were only three teachers here. So much space, because you just rolled the furniture. Bit I think kids have changed so much since this idea of the open classroom and I like the walls. It's just not as noisy, and you just feel better about doing noisy activities if you're not always concerned about making too much noise. So the walls are good. And I think the doors would be good.

JS: Oh, you do?

JB: Yes, because a lot of times the kids will be looking out there to see what's going on. So I'm all in favor of the walls. Now, one thing I think there's some poor planning in the building. Like the light switches are clear down there. Now, that doesn't make any sense. I don't know who thought of that. Let's see what else.

JS: What about in terms not necessarily of physical things but management, like some teachers had suggested that it is necessary to have time to meet. Would you feel that that was very necessary?

JB: Yeah, we always, if there are any problems, have a team meeting with the kids and discuss it. At the beginning of the year it's real important on the team that we all have the same consistency with the discipline and present that to the children so they know what's expected of them. And then everybody's pretty consistent in how they keep track. You know that whatever we have detention. . .

JS: Is that school wide or is it pretty much up to the team?

JB: It's pretty much up to the team.

JS: And for you all to meet just as teachers together. Do you have lunch all at the same time?

JB: Yeah, we have lunch and we have our specials all at the same time so we could meet in the morning all together if there's something we wanted to do so I think that's real important to have planning time together.

JS: Not just the after school time, but the day time, too?

JB: For conferences, if you wanted to have a morning conference, and things like that.

JS: You have meetings with. I know there are child study meetings, and things like that, but are there meetings with parents where you just feel like there's a concern where each member of the team might be present?

JB: Yes, sometimes everybody's there, and sometimes the way the schedule works out, I might have a student for math and for language arts, H. might have them for science, and B. and W. don't teach the student, so they wouldn't come.

JS: So it might not be their concern.

JB: So it saves some time.

JS: Just in general, does the school community support, or do you feel like it's really encouraged?

JB: Yes. In September, [the principal] really goes over the rules of a good team. For years he had these overheads, and he would go over what makes a team work and what problems a team could have. So we did have some things on those things, and I think that's important.

JS: Do you feel like everybody is sort of "in" to the idea of teams? There's nobody sort of anti-team?

JB: I think to get a job here you pretty much know that that's the way you're going to be working.

JS: So it's a choice you make before signing up.

JB: I think if you're not in favor of that, you might want to go to a different school that is more closed. Although I think most schools in the county work on a team idea where they meet together. You almost have to for field trips and things like that.

JS: Do you think that teams would happen naturally if they didn't have . . . I mean, do you think there would be a similar camaraderie and feeling even if there wasn't the physical layout or support of time together?

JB: I think there may be if you were friends with another teacher and you both taught the same grade level or grade, you might say, I teach two subjects, and you teach two subjects and we flip-flop and that would make your job easier. You wouldn't have as many preparations. I mean I guess it would depend on your personality.

JS: So it might happen or it might not?

JB: I guess it might not if you were in closed classrooms and just wanted to do your own thing, although I think even if you were all separate, contained fifth grade, when you went to go on a field trip, you would have to meet together. There are certain things you have to do together.

JS: Do you have any further thoughts?

JB: No. I really enjoy teaming.

[end of tape]

Appendix E

Transcript of interview with Kelly

Julia Shields: So what I'm trying to do in the project is just to find out teachers' opinions about team teaching.

Kelly: Now you mean team teaching in the way we do it or do you mean two teachers in one class?

J: In the way you do it here, where you just share ideas, materials, and then you have meetings, and things like you do.

K: Perfect.

J: What has been your experience with it and what are your likes and dislikes?

K: I'm probably going to have almost all likes. Because I student-taught here, I've only been around team teaching. Most of my likes are: it's nice to have new ideas from other teachers, there's certainly a lot of flexibility in your schedule where you can put things together, you can trade classes, you're kind of on the same schedule as everybody else. It makes it, it's more personal, makes your job more personal. I think if people are around you that you can bounce ideas off of and get feedback from, that's much more helpful than you go home and talk to your husband or somebody else and try to figure out the problems.

There's one drawback I see and that could be if there was somebody on the team that you didn't get along with. You almost have to get along with the people you're teaming with or else it can be a disaster and it has happened to me one time where there was a conflict between two teachers and it was really hard to have team meetings and it was hard to have discussions without people being sarcastic or cynical and trying to outdo somebody else. If you want to be Teacher of the Year and you want to do all these great things, that's what happened in this school, not to me, then that doesn't work. It has to be done with people who like to team, and I do think there are teachers who want to teach independently, in that they want to have their own agenda and schedule. It's just a difference in personalities. When we interview, we ask, "Can you work in a team?" Naturally, everybody says yes because they want to get the job. But the idea is you have to be able to get along with people in order to work together.

J: What are the personality characteristics that make this team work, do you think?

K: Flexibility. Obviously you've seen, you don't have to have a good sense of humor, but you wouldn't really be able to sit at our meetings without, and L., she's quiet. I think it's nice to have a mix. If everybody talks as much as I do, then it would probably be a problem. You know you've got to have people who are a little quieter. One drawback I see is, and my strength is not to delegate as much as, I probably do more work than I need to be doing. I could give more to other people, just being the team leader, and that's not my strength. I'd like for them to say, "I'll do that, I'll do that." And sometimes I get frustrated and I just say, "OK, you have to do this, you have to do that," and I don't like to do that, but at the same time, I can't, and part of it is that I've been here the longest and I know a whole lot more than they do. And then usually the person who's been here the longest is the team leader. Whoever's been here the longest, it has to be a tenured person, and then that person could become the team leader, unless he sees someone that would really not be a good team leader.

J: The principal, you mean.

K: Yes, he picks them.

J: And do you know if there were a person who just didn't feel like they would be a good team leader, would that be OK? Could they just continue to teach . . .

K: It puts a strain on it. It happened in second grade here. The lady I student-taught with, the year after I student-taught, decided she was going to be Teacher of the Year, an example, they did a camp out and as part of their project, the kids had made these paper tents in all the classes. She went out a bought tents and she put tents up in her classroom so the parents came through and in her room, there were nice tents, Blue Ridge Mountain Sports tents, and in the other classrooms they had, you know, big construction paper, or roll paper tents that they'd made and colored the outside. So it was almost, I can show everyone that I'm better than everyone else here. And I think that's like 1% of the teachers who would do that. That kind of person should be in a school where there are doors and you don't have to mingle and talk and do all that stuff if you don't want to. I mean, I don't think you have to sit and be social, but you do have to be willing to change your schedule at the last minute, do all guest speakers together, videos together, and do everything together. And if there was somebody that was just, we do it more in fourth grade than others. I think the other grades have certain activities they do together. It's hard to get four

people that can actually work together, and spend as much time, at lunch, at our meetings twice a week, and get along.

J: You really spend a lot of time together.

K: Yeah, some teams have a meeting only on Thursdays. Some teachers don't know what's in their community. They don't even know what the other teachers are doing.

J: Like you all did magnetism all at the same time. They wouldn't necessarily do that.

K: They wouldn't do that. And that's partially because we plan it that way. In my first couple of years, it wasn't like that. It was teach whatever you want, whenever you want. But if you want a kit from the county, the county sets it up that way. You can get it for four weeks, if all the teachers want it, or two weeks if one teacher needs it.

J: So the county is kind of supporting it.

K: In terms of taking out the kits. If there's only one kit in the county, they'd rather send it to one school for a month, than, you know, nobody.

J: What about specials, do you think that, like when you do art together, and things like that?

K: I think it works much better, because all the materials are out that everybody needs, and that's a lot of the reason why a lot of teachers don't do extra hands-on activities, because they don't want to have to get out the tempura paint, mix the powder in the water, get the paper, and I think it's a great idea. Plus the kids interact, they can discuss it and talk about what they did. We've done it before where you don't even have to stay in your homeroom for the art time. You could pick to be where your friends were if you agreed not to be too loud.

J: So it sounds like doing things together might allow you to do even more things than you could on your own, makes it easier.

K: Oh I think it definitely does.

J: Do you think that teams would naturally form in some schools, or do you think the school has to support it?

K: I think it's a mix. I think the school will support, this school in particular, and I can only speak knowledgeably about, but this school has, [the principal] is very supportive of, he would rather see us do team activities, I mean he prefers that we do things together because it makes his life easier and makes everybody's life easier, but I think if there was a team where people chose not to do things together he would support that. I don't think it's fair to hire someone and say,

"You can only have this job if your going to work well with Ms. Shields." Because that's not always going to happen.

J: Ms. Shields shouldn't determine the team.

K: I think the concept of teaming is still what this school's made up of. I mean he still likes the idea. That's why we have PIC. I go to the meeting, I come back and share with my team, instead of everybody going to a meeting and every single person, you know. And that's not efficient. It's much more efficient to take one person from a selected group and say," Now you go report." So he likes this idea.

J: Where you here when they had the transition to teams?

K: It's always been teams. I mean I was here when they didn't have any walls, nothing, one big fourth grade room. Every grade was just a giant room. They had classroom teachers and you were in a class, with little desks and rollies. So I've watched it go from that to walls, but you know, the huge opening for the doorway. So there's no door and you still have the center area to have meetings and speakers, whatever.

J: And [the principal], has he been here . .

K: All 23 years.

J: And has it always been teams?

K: Yes, because it was built in the seventies, it's always been open classroom, open school idea. I forget, '73 or something like that. So it's very team. Now, they've even had 2-3 combinations, 3-4 combinations, mixed grades which makes it a little more difficult when you're working in a team. Like in this area, they may have had third and fourth graders to have to mix. But that's never happened since I've been here.

I think it would be different to go to a different school for me to not have the support, like I can run over right now and ask another teacher something, and it would be different for me to feel like I couldn't do that. I think it would be like culture shock for me to go to a different school where I had a door, a classroom, where there was no correspondence during the day with, I mean just think about how much we see the other teachers, and that just doesn't happen in other schools. I mean, it can't, and I don't know how you could.

J: Do you think they're equally important, the sharing of materials and the feeling of community?

K: I think they're both equal, you need them both to work, to be effective, you need to have both.

J: Do you feel like you save time even though you have all these meetings, do you feel like you save time in terms of planning? Or not necessarily.

K: Yes, because I think if someone has a good idea then they'll say, "Here, try this, that would be a good history lesson" Much more so than if you were all by yourself, and you said, OK I'm going to teach this, and you have to come up with everything all by yourself. I mean just think about ordering videos, I order them for everybody, so it takes more of my time, more than it does everybody else's, but that's my job. Unfortunately, I don't get paid anything extra. They used to get paid for it.

J: Oh, you don't get anything more?

K: No, so it's like a pain in the patoot. That's my nice word.

But I like it, I mean if I had to give up teaching I would want to leave it this way. I just think about how much I see them during the day, and if you had your own class, you would never see each other. Maybe at lunch. It's just like when you see one group line up, you know it's time to line up. It just works so much better. I'm a fan. Big fan.

[end of tape]

Appendix F

Notes from interview with Linda

Years of experience: first year teacher

L: "I love it. It's so helpful."

L: "I student-taught here and was an aide here, so I was used to no doors and working with teams."

Did not hear much about team teaching when getting training at [college].

L: Advantages:

helpful to be able to share ideas and what has worked or not worked

most important: support

L: Disadvantages:

have to be able to give a little

everything in teams requires compromise

if someone wasn't willing to do that, could be a problem if they wanted to be off on their own

L: "When I think of schools with teams, I think 'communication'."

L: You have to be open-minded and honest

L: Can only think of one time when it was hard and that was when I had to flip-flop my schedule because of students being taken out of history for extra help, but that's the only time. It's not a big deal, just have to make adjustments.

L: Hired on a Friday to begin work on Monday. Had no materials, this room was a storage room. The other teachers helped so much. It would have been a lot harder of a school without teams. "I had A.'s stuff up here, K's here, G's here . . ." Then after a couple of weekends, I could get my own stuff.

L: Support of school:

We know that there are set times to talk. Otherwise, it would be hard to get four teachers together, between child study meetings . . .It might be hard to talk if we didn't know that we had set meetings.

Appendix G

Transcript of interview with Gina

Julia Shields: What I am doing is basically getting the feelings of this team's, their thoughts and impressions on team teaching. I don't have a set of questions I want to ask you, just basically get your ideas. What is your experience with team teaching?

G: I'm new to team teaching as of last year. I came from New York and I had taught for nine years in a self-contained, in fourth grade I was self-contained, and then I taught departmentalized in sixth grade.

J: Self-contained meaning, like not special ed. but

G: It was a regular ed. classroom. And I did that for five years. Then I did departmentalized in sixth grade for four years.

J: What subject did you do that in?

G: Math and Reading, or Language Arts. My experience with team teaching is - I think it's great. Because you get to talk to the other teachers about what they're doing. Everybody is pretty much up on what everybody else is doing. You don't have to . . .I know in fourth grade, we all have our different styles, it's not like we're teaching exactly the same. But we just converse more, which I didn't get that when I was in New York. You would just close the door and do your own thing. I mean that has it's pluses too.

J: Did you feel like when you were teaching in New York that this was something that you wanted or you just found it?

G: Yeah, I just found it. I never even really thought about it. I mean I did miss talking to adults and other teachers, and seeing, "Have you tried this unit?" "What worked for you and what didn't work for you?". That I definitely missed and I wished I had more of that there, but I had no time to do that there. And that's what we get here, where you sit down and talk about the different subjects and the different topics, "what have you found that works and maybe I'll try this" There's much more sharing going on.

J: I'm interested in the time element. I'm wondering if you do, you are required to spend time in a meeting here, but do you think it saves you time overall?

G: As far as planning goes?

J: Right.

G: No. It doesn't. Because we each have our different teaching styles, so all we do really is plan topics, you know like Colonial Day we planned together, but as far as the different topics and the way you're going to go about executing it is entirely up to you, the teacher. So as far as planning, it doesn't, I don't think it saves a lot of time. Sometimes, for example, if I plan some project or something, I'll share it and I'll give a copy to you. So if I get a copy of something that's you know from another teacher that's great, well then, that saves time. In that way I can cover something that someone else has prepared, but

J: But like in New York, it wouldn't have saved you any time.

G: No, it's just feedback. And just support. It's great as far as support goes, and you need that. Rather than just shutting your door and just planning a lesson and having it either go really well and you want to share it with someone and there's no one there to share it with or if it flops you want moral support, you know Oh my gosh, I really spent a lot of time planning this thing, and it was horrible.

J: Do you think it would have made a difference if when you were a first year teacher you had had

G: Yeah. A thing that I wish [this county] had here, I had a unique situation, I was in a mentor program and I had an experienced teacher work with me, that's what a team really I'm sure is, you know just support. I can't imagine being a first year teacher being thrown into the classroom and not having any type of support or feedback or sorority or something. That first year ahhh.

J: What would you . . do you see benefits for kids or mainly for you as a teacher?

G: I do. I see benefits for kids definitely because they're all doing basically the same things and there's connection for the kids, especially that we switch classes and the kids get to interact so much with each other. They see a lot of us.

J: What would you see.. it sounds like the major advantages are communication and support from each other. What about drawbacks?

G: Ummm. Sometimes on time frames. We're going to do this for two weeks and then we're going to go on to something else, sometimes I feel, I know with the way I am that if I can't get something done in a two week program I would like to have the option to say that, and sometimes I just feel like I have to rush stuff, and I don't know if that has to do with team teaching or just that there's so much on the curriculum.

J: When you were teaching in your own classroom, did you feel like you had more control about how long things would last?

G: Yes, definitely yes.

J: Anything else? Any other drawbacks?

G: I don't think so - just time is an issue, is a really big issue. You know some things even that I want to spend a lot of time on, and there're other things that I could get through so much quicker than the allotted amount of time. I think that's the major flaw that I've found.

J: What do you think is necessary for a team to work well?

G: Flexibility. Definitely. Compromise. You have to be a very open-minded person. You just have to be able to be flexible, be patient, and just sit back at times and just listen to what others have to say and their ideas and their opinions. I think that's a big thing, just flexibility and just to be cooperative.

J: What about school-wide things? Do you think that there are things that could make a school work or not work within the school design? Whether it's the physical design or that the school requires you all to meet . .

G: I think that the way [this school] is designed, I don't see how we could not team teach. Because we don't have doors and I think it's wonderful that there's that middle there and we can all meet together there with the kids. I know in New York, there was one year when I taught and the fourth grade teachers, we were all over, because we just didn't have room. There were two of us in one wing and two of us in another wing. You definitely have to be around each other all the time for it to work. One year I was downstairs and the rest of them were upstairs, all over.

J: Are there any things beside the physical design that support teams here? One other person had mentioned that you had the same time schedule and that you can meet, it's possible for you to meet.

G: With scheduling, oh yeah, yeah, you would definitely have to have the same prep times. I mean we have PE at the same time, if we can't get stuff covered after school, you definitely have to have the same time schedules, you need that.

J: Are there other less tangible things that make you feel like teams work here that might not work somewhere else? . . . like just an attitude or community feeling . . .

G: Yes. It's definitely the personality makeup. You have to have someone that going to agree to work as a team. Someone that's going to want to go into their classroom and do what they want to do, regardless of your time specifications and what you plan, the team as a whole is just not going to work. You have to have someone who's a team player, who's flexible, and who's going to agree. I think if you get one person that doesn't want to be a part of the team, the whole team can just crumble.

J: So when you started working here, did they interview you?

G: Yes. And they asked me, they told me all about the team, and what a team consists of and did I have any objections to that. They were very honest with me. And they said if you have any objections to working with a team like that then this is not the place for you.

J: Did that really cause you to stop and think about whether this could be a problem?

G: Yes and no. I mean, I think that I'm a pretty agreeable person, and that it wouldn't bother me in any way, and I was happy to have the support, to be able to work with people that were there for me, especially coming in cold. I came in in January, and that was hard so anything they wanted to support me and help me out I was ready for. "You're going to help me out? Good." It's great, it really is. I had nine years of experience to back me, but still, coming from a different state, I have no idea what the curriculum is, and being a part of the team that definitely helped me get my planning and just with everything. I can't imagine having to start all over again, even with the nine years, it would just be a nightmare, a nightmare, if someone just threw me into the classroom and said "do it."

I would like to have a door though. I always fell bad, if my kids are doing a hands-on activity, I always feel like I'm disturbing everybody else around me. I love to do hands-on things and projects, and that just bothers me that I can't shut the door and let the kids just go. I always feel bad for the other teachers.

J: So it's more of noise coming out than coming in.

G: Right. From my room, etc.

J: Any other thoughts?

G: The disadvantage is just the time. Sometimes I feel like I wish I had more, but that's it really.

J: So it's not the time that you have to spend planning, it's the time that you would like to allow things to run.

G: Right. Even if I plan a unit for four weeks, but if I have some sort of project the kids are doing, or they didn't get it right away, I need more time. That's when I feel kind of stifled. But that's the only thing. And everybody here has been great to me. If I had somebody who was horrible, I'm sure I would have an entirely different opinion about teaming.

J: So personality is key.

G: Definitely.

J: Well if you think of anything else, etc.[we stopped the tape for a few minutes, then started again because she thought of something she wanted to add]

G: When I wasn't in a team, I found that teachers got extremely competitive and extremely protective over their units and their lessons and everything was just a competition. "Oh you're doing that? I didn't do it in that way." Or if I remember asking this one particular teacher if I could just look at a test that he was giving, and he said, "As long as you copyright it and put my name on the bottom of the test." So it just got like extremely territorial. It got to the point where one year nobody wanted to share anything. And everybody was the best at what they were doing, and I'm going to shut my door and this is what I'm doing.

J: That's interesting because I love sharing.

G: Oh, I do, too. And I love getting things from people because people see things in a different way and you could just "Oh, I never thought of that!". So it's a good thing. And teaching, you can get so isolated because you're with kids all day. Even when we don't sometimes talk about school or things I just love to talk to an adult during the day. When I wasn't team teaching, it was like I did my job, I had my prep periods, I didn't have any other team members, and I did get a lot of work done, but I didn't have time to talk to people.

J: Well, that can be important.

G: Oh gosh, oh yeah. Otherwise, you just go batty. But I did find that it was very competitive, and very territorial, and that was just such a turn off.

[end of tape]

Appendix H

Transcript of interview with Wanda

Julia Shields. This is for my final project at the University of Virginia and what I'm investigating is team teaching and it's just sort of a case study to see what teachers here at this school feel about team teaching.

W. OK

J. It's basically just your opinions. I don't have a whole set of questions. So we can make it as short or as long as you want. Basically I would just like to know what do you like or dislike about team teaching?

W. With team teaching I do like the support that you have from the other teachers. If you get in a bind you always have someone there to support you.

J. Are there any additional things . .. that was the main thing.

W. Yes

J. Are there any other smaller things that are less significant? Is it mainly emotional support or do you feel professional support?

W. Both. I think both.

J. What kinds of things would you share with each other that would help you?

W. OK, if we have a problem, let's say, that we're teaching math and we've tried many different things to reach one student, two students, whatever and you're finding that the things you've tried they're not working so you can go to someone else and they'll give you support. We usually when we meet as a team, we do discuss students sometimes. Everyone has some input on some things that they would try. Things that have worked for them.

J. What would be some things that you would not like? Could you first tell me what you're experiences are with team teaching and how long you've been here at [this school].

W. This year, this is my eleventh year.

J. And did you teach elsewhere before?

W. No.

J. So you've been here at [this school] since the beginning of your teaching.

W. That's right.

J. OK. So there's nothing to compare it with. But if you can imagine having your own classroom just to yourself what might you prefer then that you wouldn't have in a team or just in general or any ideas that come to mind about what you dislike in team teaching.

W. Well, let's see, even with my student teaching it was team teaching.

J. Oh really?

W. Yes

J. Was it here?.

W. Yes. It was in Richmond. Because you're pretty much closed off from everyone from talking with other teachers.

J. Do you think there's anything in your day to day where you just think this might be easier by myself or anything? . . . Maybe there's nothing; I'm not trying to force you to say something.

W. If you're off in some area and there's some activities where it's kind of loud and you just can't do that. The teachers understand and they will work with you but you just don't have . .. I don't feel comfortable doing an activity that's really noisy when you have other teachers teaching around you. . . but we do it. -

J. What do you think are things that make a team work? If you didn't have these things the team just wouldn't work. Can you think of any elements that are essential to team teaching?

W. OK. Let's see... We have to compromise a lot. Being flexible. I know at one time they called us the slinky team.

J. Slinky. That's a compliment

W. Yeah. Very flexible here. With this team we just look out for each other. I don't know. I've talked with other people and this is a great team to be on.

J. That's nice when you feel that way about the people you're working with.

W. I mean you have to be able to get along and we get along very well. Honesty. We can talk about anything. For instance, we feel that if we need to go to a teacher to talk to them about something then we can just do that. We usually just end up laughing it off and we'll work through it.

J. That's good. It sounds more comfortable than some other situations.

W. Yeah I know it.

J. Do you feel that you as a group have a larger voice in the school as a whole or is it about the same that you would if you were just a classroom teacher.

W. I think it's probably about the same.

J. Can you think of anything to add? Do you feel that you would always prefer to team teach or would it really matter one way or the other? Did you look for a team teaching school when you were looking for jobs?

W. No. See, being that I haven't had that other experience, I just don't know.

J. Thank you very much for doing this.

[end of tape]

Appendix I

Transcript of first interview with principal

Julia Shields: This is my field project for sort of a culmination as you graduate, but it's not a thesis in that we're no trying to prove anything. It's just we have a question about something and we're investigating it. I've worked in a school that didn't have teams and then coming here, it was just an interesting difference, so I decided to investigate that side of it. I really like the atmosphere, but I'm sure everyone has different perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages and ways that it works best and what's necessary for success. I've interviewed the fourth grade teachers and I wanted to get your perspective, and also if you could suggest another team for me to interview, I'd like to ask another team if I could interview them. I'm looking for a team that, this team is very heterogeneous [meant homogeneous] in the fourth grade, they're all women, close to my age, white, basically similar philosophies, and I'm wondering if there's a team at this school. I'm not looking for anything bad or good or anything, just a little bit more unusual, a more heterogeneous group.

Principal M: Well, we have fifth grade, a male teacher, a minority, so that may be something you want to talk to [Julie] about, the team leader.

J: Thanks. So you been here from the beginning.

M: Basically, 23 years ago I was invited to come as principal. I finally agreed to do that based on the fact that I could select my faculty, rather than just having people put into the building. So we got this all worked out through the administration, and I basically interviewed 68 candidates and selected 22 to get started. We operated with the concept of teams right from the beginning. We were in an old building until December before we could move into this building because the contractors we behind. So we went ahead and set up in our teams in the old McIntire school and then on December 4th or 7th ? in 1974. We were all set to go. First of all, I wanted someone that liked that particular concept. I, anyone was sort of like, "Well, I'm not really sure" then we just basically eliminated that person. If they had any reservations at all, you need to be fair to me, fair to yourself. If you have reservations, I think they will only grow. We got some folks like that who would say, "I don't think I could, I have this concern". That's fine, I can appreciate that and it's for the best. So anyway, we got started that away. Well, the idea was that we had quote a team leader, for each team, and each team from the very beginning was based on the

grade, fourth grade, fifth grade. There's a number of ways I've read about of selecting team leaders. You can let the team pick the team leader, or I can select, and there are probably some other methods. I chose to go ahead and invite someone to be the team leader of each team. Basically the team leader as I was viewing it, and still do, that's the person basically who has the responsibility of getting the group together, getting the meeting started, and keeping things flowing. However, I don't feel that the team leader has any more quote authority, if you want to use that term, in the team, each teacher is on equal footing. If you and I are serving on a team, and you're team leader, what you have to say shouldn't have any more power than what I have to say, we're all on equal footing. Leaders have the responsibility of pulling the team together, that's their responsibility that certain things are taken care of, that's their responsibility as team leader. Basically, we like for members of a team to reach consensus and go forth and perform. So, it's not like well, we sat down and we quote reach a con-ensus, but I'm really going to do it some other way. That's where trouble begins, but that happens. And I've seen it happen from time to time.

Going back to the beginning again, after we got started the first year, as we had vacancies, what I would do is interview as many folks as I thought necessary, always two or three, that I would narrow it down to for the position. And I would have at least two maybe three folks to meet with the team. Basically, the team then would say to me, "We would like to have this person on our team." Sometimes I would go to the team, and find that they would say of the three people that we've interviewed, which one would you eliminate right up front? Usually that works pretty quickly. Fine, now we're working with two candidates. Which of the two would you prefer? Sometime they tell me right off; sometimes they say I like this about this one and back and forth and finally they say, well which one do you like. Well, basically, I like both of them. If I didn't then they wouldn't be there talking to you. There could be some exception to that, for example, if Mrs. Smith is in town from Colorado . . [they know this is not someone I'm recommending, just catch her while she's here] I have had a few situations where I've said to a team, why don't you decide who you want to be the team leader and usually it may go back to the same person or something like that. It hasn't been any extra pay or anything for their particular responsibilities. In the future there may be. But still we plan to operate on the same basis.

Let me give you some of the nitty-gritty. I think on any, sometimes people think of team teaching as people sitting there working on parts of the curriculum, putting it together and so forth, some of those things take place. You can save a lot of time, for example, if you have a real knack for social studies then you can do some units on social studies or maybe some units on science and share those, then we can come together as a team , then we're both saving time and probably getting a good quality product as well. [Gives an example of how everyone can contribute to a unit you're making to use in three weeks, calling in outsiders, using different kits, etc.] A person should come prepared with some materials that they know is available to them and add onto that and modify that and maybe come up with a better product than one person. They have the wheel, it's just an adjusting of the spokes. And that's one thing I would hope that at just about every team meeting a few students would be discussed. In other words [gives an example of how a conversation about a kids would go, what various teachers have observed and what they could do to improve their work with a particular]. [Discusses the advisor/advisee concept that was a thing many years ago where one teacher would be responsible for knowing how a student was doing in every class]. So if you have a few people to talk about at each meeting time, it's not a great burden. For a lot of them, they're doing well in this and this and this, good. Begin to focus in on those who need a little extra something, on the upper end as well as the lower end. So that's maybe idealistic, but really in my mind that's what I see happening, some to greater degrees than others with different teams. But that's what I expect. And I know that if people do that, they can be successful.

There's another thing that I think is probably most important. There has to be a very, very strong level of trust for a team to be successful. And I think of something like this window, we can draw line here and here [divides a frame into four quarters]. Basically, it's four windows. Over here's the window where certain things that you know about me and I know about you and we both know that we know those things and we're sort of comfortable with those things. In this window over here, there are some things that as I get to know you and as we begin to build trust with each other, that I will probably say to you and you will probably say to me that we still feel comfortable with. We can knock this out and knock out this barrier here and move down into this window. It's a little tougher down here. We really have to feel real trustworthy, I may even get to the point that I feel comfortable sharing maybe personal thing that

I have and maybe seek your advice or something like that. So we can knock down another barrier. There's only this one block over here now. Sometimes, unfortunately folks stay in this window, maybe they occasionally get across the line. But I hope that every team could operate at least at this level. And maybe have a few other things in this level. Over here [the last window] there are some things that probably, I guess all of us have some things we're really not going to share with anyone. I mean these are really probably more personal things. And that's OK. But I think man, if we could have this window under control, working from time to time in this period here, That means that maybe we have some communication signals. We used to do a little hand signal when we met with teams. I don't know if anyone still does this or not, every once in a while I mention it. If we talked about something, math unit or what have you, and you're working with the more difficult math because you have a flair for that and someone else doesn't, so that's taken care of, but it's all worked out. So we say all right, team how do we feel about that? If you give five fingers, it's hey we're really ready to go. OK that's what we're going to do . And that's what we may do because everybody is holding up five fingers. [Everyone is responding] and you can get a quick count. So if I hold up a few fingers, then the team leader or another member of the team, will say, why [M], tell us what you don't like about this or what's the problem here? Then I may just say, well gee, you know I'm going to have to do thus and so, and I really don't feel comfortable doing that. And someone else might say, well gee I don't mind doing that, I'd be happy, would you do part of it and I could pick up on this? OK so we've reached an understanding. And I can say, OK hey, if you have four or five that means we're going to roll with it. If you get down under that, or if there's something I just can totally not agree with, you get this [a closed fist]. Now it may be that I have some hangups, or we have some hangups and need to restructure something. Why? Hopefully I'm going to be open minded, but yet it may be something that just goes completely against my grain and I can't live with it. Then I think we're going to have to make some adjustments here because we're not going to have three people on the team this if I'm doing this.

Now there are different types of people on a team and I find, I have some transparencies are used here that I will share with you, that will capture that. Basically, there are five, I can't remember all these right off, five elements you need really a stabilizer on the team, need someone to monitor what's taking place. Then I had some others that are undesirable habits, you

know you get someone on the team, you're all discussing something, and this guy's reading the sports page. Or you get someone "stone face": whatever you come up with, they're against it. "No there's no way that's going to work, we did that fifteen years ago, didn't work then it's not going to work now." Well, what's happening to a team if you've got someone like that? It gets annoying. Someone doesn't feel good about that. But then is there someone on the team who would feel confident enough to say "Hey you know, I've just noticed that for the last couple of months, all the things that we've come up with and discussed, you're not in favor of. We need to really get this out on the table and get some understanding here. Unfortunately, what happens many times people keep, like a sponge, soak up a little of this, a little of this, and a little of this and pretty soon, the sponge is just full. And guess what happens, they run in and wring that out on my desk. So now what can you do. But they don't want anyone to know that they've unloaded on me. The problem is still there. They feel a little better; they've put it in my court. Well, I'm not going to let it stay in my court. So I'll go through and review the things that as a team member the responsibilities that they have. First of all, I could bring this up by bringing all the teams together and put it on the table. If they're a little shaky with that, then the person that you have this feeling about you need to get you two together, and say, "Hey this is a concern that I had and I really want to share it with you." And you share it. Where do you go from there? Again, you have to hope the person is going to be receptive on the other end and not get angry and so forth. So it has to work both ways to work it out. If you can't work it out with the individual, OK, then you need to bring it to the team. That's another approach. Or if the person doesn't want to do that, I'll say, I'm willing to come sit at your team. But then of course there's the idea that people are going to know and they'll say, well, gee, why didn't you say something to us? Which is a really valid point.

A quick example of ten or twelve years ago, I had a team leader, I didn't know this until later, but apparently she was coming down hard on her team, which she shouldn't have been doing to begin with. Well, the team members, the other three, just right at the meeting, called her by name and said, "Hey, we feel that you're really, something's wrong here, because if you haven't been operating this way for the last couple of months well you have been" Well we found out that she was in the process of divorce and all this kind of stuff, so I guess she was just uptight and wasn't really thinking of her fellow colleagues. She was just hammering away and

cutting them off short and everything else. Well, that got resolved and the team leader that was doing all this, let the team know how appreciative she was of them letting her know how she was responding because she had no intention of responding in a negative sense, but it was happening. Well, I guess about three weeks after that the team leader then came to see me and told me of that experience and how much she appreciated the trust that her team members had that they would discuss that with her and give her an opportunity to correct the problem. They didn't come running in to me. They never came in to see me. I wouldn't have known about it probably if she didn't come in and make me aware of it. So here's a team that was good, a little problem came about and getting to be a severe problem and they took the bull by the horns and approached it directly and blended into an even stronger team than they were before. Because that really built the trust. It took something to be able to sit down and say it. It really brought the team together.

To me it's almost like an individual, even if you don't have a team, you have an individual that's in a school that sort of have poison all the time, other people are going to feel that. That doesn't mean that everyone's happy all the time. Let me show you a sheet that a guy gave to me, called Killer Phrases. Those are things we really don't need in school or don't need anywhere to make an organization or group or a team or anything function. Well, I've rambled on a lot but that sort of my view of how I envision this.

[end of tape]

Appendix J

Transcript of second interview with principal

Julia Shields: After interviewing some of the teachers and talking to you, I have a feel for what seems to be the most important elements of team teaching, and I wanted to list them and see if you could tell me if you think that they are all important, or which is maybe the most important, and then if you had anything to add to that. They are:

- the team members are on equal footing
- there must be trust and communication
- there must be an effort to reach a consensus and for everyone to follow that
- each member has a responsibility to the other members
- teams have a say in the hiring of new teachers
- teams have a structured time to meet during the day or after school

Do any of those strike you as most important?

Principal M: Well, I think certainly some of the first things you mentioned about trust and communication seems to be higher in the hierarchy, like certain times to meet, I think that's important, but if you don't have the other things, you may as well not have any time to meet.

J: When teams meet, it sounds like the team leaders get everyone together, they talk about curriculum, make plans, and talk about students. It seems that the teachers seem to appreciate that it's very efficient, they can meet in teams, and then can meet with you also. So those seem like good things.

What in your perception, do teachers enjoy most about being on a team? What keeps them satisfied?

M: Well, I think if the team is pretty much following the elements that you just mentioned earlier, that it gives them someone to, they feel part of a team, instead of I'm just a loner. And I used to hear quite often teachers are down the hall and they close their door and do their thing and they wouldn't see other people except at a faculty meeting once a month or something like that. This way a small group has the opportunity to share ideas and it's more manageable. I think they just get a lot more out of that. Then of course from time to time you may have a Kindergarten team meet with a first grade team they might want to look at students who are

moving up or meet in the middle of the year and say, "What are you finding the students are most weak in?" So they have an opportunity to adjust what they're doing in the Kindergarten this year.

J: So there would be correspondence between the grades.

M: Then of course you always have the fifth grade students who are going to Jouett. We work real closely with the sixth grade teachers and the guidance people there. The guidance folks come down here and the kids go up at least twice before school is out. And we even had some who were at school here last year be a buddy and pair up with the children in the middle school. so there's that relationship as well.

J: So all through the school, teachers are talking to each other.

M: Also, we've had sometimes the third grade teachers here meet with the third grade teachers at Agnor Hurt. We did that our last staff development day, as a matter of fact all of our teachers from all of the grade levels had the opportunity to meet with Agnor Hurt. Three teams went to Agnor Hurt and three came over here to balance it out a little bit. Like I said I don't know, some people say like, we thought that was pretty good and others don't say much. I guess it all depends on their groups. Some of them talked about curriculum and shared their ideas of what they were doing, what they were finding resource material, and that kind of thing, and to me again, it's just another dimension - bringing another group in that has a common interest.

J: More people to bounce ideas off of. I'm just hearing a lot of positive things. What, in your experience, have been possible problems? You talked about maybe communication problems that need to be resolve. Are there any other things that a teacher might dislike about being on a team?

M: I can think of one particular situation from all the years I've been here, one teacher really was not a team player at all. She would use the team members to get information, she would use the team members to set up an operation and materials and display and so forth. Then this person would send the rest of the team out with the kids for recess or something during the time when she had invited parents to come in and see these things, and basically it was patting herself on the back, "Look what I have done", not giving people credit for what they had done, see that was not a team effort. That was a team effort, I call it something like leech, extracting from them their talents and so forth and then she was wanting to meet with parents and pat herself on the back and "Look what I have done". I think usually a team you hear "we" and "our". If you hear

"mine, mine, mine", that person isn't thinking as a team. That was I guess the only open display of not being a team member that I've seen. I don't mind saying that individual isn't with us anymore, because she just wasn't team-oriented. Now the lady had as good ideas of anyone I've heard. She had spent a lot of years, she was pretty sharp, but she was all, she was focussed within herself. She couldn't look beyond what other people had to offer, she felt she had all the answers. That was not a good situation.

J: Basically, it sounds like this school is really most interested in making the team work together, and doing something for the good of the team rather than for everybody branching off and doing all sorts of different things, even if they might be excellent things.

M: I expect a person to teach based on their personalities, and the way they do things, I have no problem with that I mean we all have our style, but at least we all want to be in the same ball park, that's what we're dealing with. I think many times you have to change your strategies in really getting the objectives to a child that's fine, you need to do that. Our part is you may need a different prescription, but our part is we want everyone to be able to for example to type this many words on the keyboard at a certain point, well not everyone is going to be able to do that, but maybe a child needs more practice and we want to provide more practice and time to get them to that point some may go far beyond, but this is our goal. I always feel like we talk about goals, I think it's important that goals be written, to me if you don't write it then you really don't have one.

J: I know you have lots of important roles in the school. What would be your most important role in terms of teams? I know obviously hiring, it seems like you also do a lot of encouraging communication within the school. Do you see either of those as the most important or something else?

M: I think they are certainly important. I feel as a team it gives me an opportunity to meet with a small group that has hopefully common concerns, common interests, and can communicate their problem or concern and work through that in a small group. It's really something pertinent to that group, say fourth grade for example, with fifth grade they have different concerns or different things we need to work with. That's when we have a PIC meeting, Program Improvement Committee, with the team leaders as representative from each grade level. We usually say, if there's something that pertains to more than your community then that's a good place to discuss

it. With just something pertaining to your community, I will make a point to go at least once a week to go to a team meeting and talk about what's pertinent to that team.

J: So you don't waste the other people's time.

M: That's right. If it's two or more communities, well that's okay, but sometimes we start and I'll say, "Does anybody else have a concern with this?" And I say, "Well, I'll get with you on that later" because it's just pertinent to that team.

J: That seems really respectful of people's time.

M: Then yesterday, I made it round to all of the communities because I wanted to let them know that if they needed additional trade books or any other thing that fell into the textbook realm of approved items they would have $1000 more to spend and to let me know what they needed. So they were very receptive to that.

J: So you went around to each meeting for that.

M: See now that's something I could have just announced or put it in the minutes but I felt they would have a few questions, "Does this all have to be spent in the language arts area?" "No." "Could we maybe get . . ." "Yes", "No". "What about . . ." We have an adopted list for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade of trade books that the school board, any of those on that list have been approved and yes, you can order those. Trying to think of all those things and write it up, it's easier to deal with all of their questions and just deal with it then. Also it's nice to see the smile on their faces.

J: Is there any other thing that you can think of that you see as something you couldn't just not do, something that's really important that you do for the teams? Do you do a presentation at the beginning of the year where you outline what you expect of teams?

M: Well, yeah, we have reviews of that from time to time. I even think if you have the same teachers each year it's important to take at least a while and just review things. It's like something that you do all year, but you've had the summer off, you come back, and you can prepare a few little points and this is what helps people to start thinking again, hey we're a team, we're important, and then move on. Another thing I guess I like to think of about teams is to sort of personalize, in a sense, that you go to a team, really we have six or seven teachers on a special team, they are all, it's amazing, somewhat different in a sense, and to go in and chat with them. You get to know people better. Hopefully, they will get to know each other better, you know that window thing we were talking about, they get to know people better, I feel like I get to know

them better I think when you get to sit down in a small group and chat informally, and feel comfortable in saying what we need to say. If there's something that someone has a concern about I usually feel that it comes out, and we can deal with it.

J: It seems like the teachers feel like the support they get from each other is so important. Do you feel that you get more support possibly in a team oriented thing or do you possibly get the same amount of support if it was all faculty as a group?

M: I think if the team of individuals are getting more support, that's going to elevate them to a higher level and therefore then support than I'm getting as well as giving can be at a higher level. I don't know really how you would find this but I feel as an administrator, I have a special feel or something towards the individuals that work here. In other words, I want them to be successful. And I hope through me wanting them to be successful, that's well what do I do about it? I try to make sure they have what they need to do their job with, I want to make sure they have a clean building to operate in, I want hopefully to have people interacting and working with each other to understand each other, feel good about each other, speak kindly to each other, and those types of things, and just have a good atmosphere all over. I think if those things are happening, then we're going to get a better job, the children are going to be the ones that benefit from something like this. And we go back to the point, "Why are we here?" We're here for the children. We aren't here for us. And I think that's extremely important.

I think another thing at times when a team, when one team member has the loss of a family member or some marital problem or whatever may take place, they're a little more closer knit with their group and can sort of I guess let them know that they have a concern for them and it's like a little small family there, whereas if it's just a person off in the room, you have a school where it's hard to cry out to them, but you can to a small group and they will be understanding. I think that's comforting for them to know that there's someone in the little group that will help you with it. Of course, it spreads to everyone else. If there's a death in the family or someone had a baby, put a little sign up, maybe people will bring food. Someone in the Kindergarten may not know the name of someone in the fourth grade, but they were willing to chip in to do something. So that works for good relationships. I think it's healthy when you see things like that happening.

J: And I've noticed most of the teachers eat in the lunchrooms. A lot of the time, the teachers don't, they'll stay in their own rooms.

M: Hide out in there.

J: Before you were a principal here, were you a principal elsewhere?

M: I was principal at Woodbrook for three years.

J: Did that have teams?

M: Yes.

J: I'm just wondering what made teams happen in the first place.

M: I was principal at Yancey four years before that. Then I was teaching a few years prior to that. When I was at Woodbrook, I got involved with teams. And we worked with this Individual Guided Education which had teams, a lot of other things with it. And we had two weeks of training each summer for the faculty to start with, and then all new faculty members that came in had two weeks of training. Now I worked with probably three other schools and brought our people together and provided the training for them during the summer. We continued that on for several years after we were here, but I guess like many things in education, you'll be starting out getting support, I shouldn't say, not getting support, it wasn't of any significance at the central office at this level and so forth, we used to get more support, more funds and stuff, the training in the summer, money has dropped off, and so on, a school board with different beliefs, different superintendent, and so on. But the team concept, I have continued with. The other two schools that participated, they still use a team model, Merriwether Lewis does, Sylvia and I used to plan a lot of stuff together and have the summer workshops and so forth. But we felt that was important. And so now, we can't go through all the things, and of course we're not doing all the other parts of IGE that we were doing either, but we still find that having a team concept seems to be very effective in the sense of expediting, getting information out, people having a comrade right on their right or left they can talk with or see colleagues more closely and put in a situation where they can communicate and talk, rather than go back to my room and eat my lunch, close the door and pull the curtain, or what have you.

J: The team idea mainly came about because of the IGE, and then you kept that?

M: We liked the concept with that, in particular teaming and got involved in it, and I've been doing it ever since.

[end of tape]